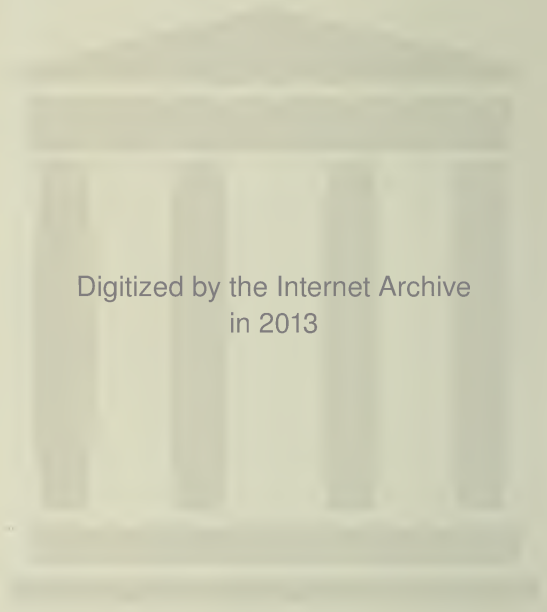

THE TEMPLE
SHAKESPEARE MANUALS

SHAKESPEARE'S LONDON

If some enchanter should offer to recover for me a single hour of the irrecoverable past, I think I should choose to be placed among the audience at the Globe Theatre, in or about the year 1600, with liberty to run round between the acts and interview the author-actor-manager, Master Shakespeare, in his tiring room. For this I would give—one can afford to be lavish in bidding for the inconceivable—say a year of my life. There is nothing more difficult than to form a vivid and satisfactory picture of the material conditions under which Shakespeare worked; and there is nothing more fascinating than the attempt to do so. It is not a matter of idle curiosity.—William Archer, on "A Sixteenth Century Playhouse," *Universal Review*, No. 2, p. 281.

VISSCHER'S VIEW OF LONDON, A.D. 1616.

Section (reduced) from the Re-production by the Topographical Society of London.

SHAKESPEARE'S LONDON

A STUDY OF LONDON
IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH

BY

T. FAIRMAN ORDISH F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF
"EARLY LONDON THEATRES"

"Souls of poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?"
—KEATS

LONDON
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PREFACE

UNDER the title "Shakespeare's London" I delivered a lecture in 1886, and again in the winter of 1887. Another lecture on the same subject, delivered at the Working Men's College in 1893, I entitled "Elizabethan London," partly because, in this lecture, I drew a contrast between Victorian London and the London of Shakespeare, but chiefly for the reason that I was then meditating the book which now sees the light, and reserved the title for this occasion.

The book has grown out of these lectures, and it covers all the ground specially emphasised in each of them. Its scope may be readily indicated by the themes of the lectures. In the first, I dealt chiefly with the theatres in Shakespeare's London. In the second, by the aid of maps and views, I described London as it was immediately before the suppression of the monasteries; the divorce between religion and the drama which followed upon the Reforma-

tion; the uprise of theatres in Protestant London, within the precincts and on the ruins of ancient religious establishments. In the third lecture all the main features of London in the time of Queen Elizabeth were briefly touched upon, and I urged, as strongly as my command of words would admit, that London—where Shakespeare lived and accomplished the work of his life—should share with Stratford-on-Avon the honour of association with the name and memory of William Shakespeare.

The objective of these studies has been the London environment of our great poet—the conditions by which he was surrounded during the productive period of his life. Such a purpose can hardly be stated without danger of misconception. It is a case wherein the shadow is more important than the substance, yet in which the shadow can only be properly apprehended by knowledge of the substance. In a word, so far is such a study of Shakespeare from being of a buckram nature, impervious to subtile influences, that the contrary may be averred with some confidence. Only those who have battened in these fields can really perceive the transforming power of the poet. When we look back upon the times in which he lived, a glamour rests upon them,

and to know the actual conditions of the period is to realise that this is largely due to Shakespeare himself. When a flower of surpassing beauty is considered, the mind inevitably passes to the conjunction of soil and climate which formed the conditions of its growth. The sense of beauty is not dulled; adoration has become intelligent appreciation. Knowledge of the surroundings amid which Shakespeare weaved his world of enchantment only enhances our sense of wonder, and it enables us to understand and appreciate better the glorious harvest of his genius.

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Gray's Inn, London.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

The Illustrations in line
are from drawings by
Mr H. Crickmore

CHAPTER I

A GENERAL VIEW

"SHAKESPEARE'S LONDON": no similar combination of words would describe so precisely the subject of these pages. "London in Shakespeare's Lifetime" would indicate a range too extensive for a book of these dimensions, while "The London of Shakespeare" would suggest only a commentary on the London scenes and allusions in Shakespeare's plays. It is with London as it concerned the life and work of Shakespeare that we have to do; the London in which he earned his living by doing the work that, after three hundred years, is recognised as the unsurpassed achievement of English literature. The importance of this subject has not been overlooked; many editors and earnest students have been before us, with their contributions of illustrations of various kinds designed to throw light upon the conditions amid which the genius of Shakespeare emerged. It may be said that the idea of environment has become a mental habit of our time. We are not content to accept any man as a portent; we view him as a product. In the case of Shakespeare,

however, the academic view has been tempered by a warm personal interest. It has, indeed, been a frequent cause of wistful regret that we have no description of Shakespeare as he lived, no word-portrait, no stray allusions as to his habits and ways or aspect—those things that affectionate homage naturally seeks for—details which could be built up into a conception of the man as he was amongst his fellow-men. This is what our sentiment yearns for—all the more because the memorials published after his death, concerned as they are rather with the works than their author, nevertheless contain indications of a personality and character of singular sweetness and charm. This impression must suffice, and refusing (as so many do with some indignation) to take the warrant of the Droeshout portrait, each of us is at liberty to form his own mental image of the person of Shakespeare. The image of his mind survives for all time, and there be those who deem this sufficient. But the merely human reader, because he is grateful, longs for some memory-picture which shall answer, in some manner, to a name that is associated with ideas of immense benefaction.

We will not offer a stone where bread is demanded. We will not, in the disengaged tone of the scientist,

say: Here, we offer you a study of Shakespeare's environment; come, view him as a product of his time. Nor do we, as a sculptor might do, offer you the death-mask of his form and feature, as the equivalent of a portrait. A cold examination of the London in which Shakespeare abode and wrote would furnish such a mask; a careful study of Elizabethan London, with its social ways and conditions, would help us to understand Shakespeare as a product. But this would not satisfy the reader who rises from his perusal of the plays, and exclaims in wonder (as who has not), Did the Elizabethans know this man for the genius he was? What were the circumstances under which these plays were written and produced?

The mould of Shakespeare (if we possessed it) could not, of itself, give the impression of the living man; the most painstaking account of London topography would not show us Shakespeare musing amid the ruins within the precinct of St Helen's, or walking observantly in the streets, or peeping from behind the arras in the Globe Theatre, to see if Lord Southampton had come to see his new play. Such impressionist realisations must appertain to the reader's imagination for the most part. The present excursion to Shakespeare's London has for its cicerone

one who has some definite ideas touching his duties to the party under his charge. The facts may be so stated as to suggest pictures, but the facts themselves are of the most importance; and there is a great deal to demand our attention within the limits at our disposal.

Let us pass over the moment of Shakespeare's arrival in London in 1585, a fugitive of twenty-one years of age, and contemplate him after the first anxieties had been overcome, and he had found employment at the theatres. Here we are in the region of fact, not fancy. A young man from a provincial town engaged as prompter's assistant at a theatre, his duties probably involving the copying of plays for the use of the actors; what were his surroundings? what were the circumstances and conditions which existed objectively to this subjective and unrevealed genius?

The first thing to be realised is the size of Shakespeare's London. In our time London has become so extended, that its original limits—the walls of the city—have become almost as obliterated in consciousness as the walls themselves are in fact. The circuit of the walls may be approximately realised by recalling the names of the principal gates which gave egress

and ingress by the chief roadways ;—beginning at the Tower of London, we can recall the existing names of Aldgate, Bishopgate, Moorgate, Cripplegate, Aldersgate, Newgate, Ludgate. This circuit, somewhat in the shape of a stretched bow, measured 2 miles and 200 yards. In ancient times there was a wall extending along the base of this circuit, defending the city on the river side, but in Shakespeare's time this wall—the string, as it were, of the stretched bow—had almost completely disappeared, and the south side of Thames Street consisted of wharves, warehouses, and other buildings. From Aldgate there were suburbs stretching as far as Whitechapel. "Both sides of the street," wrote John Stow, the contemporary of Shakespeare, "be pestered with cottages and alleys, even up to Whitechapel Church, and almost half a mile beyond it, into the common field ; all which ought to be open and free for all men. But this common field, I say, being sometime the beauty of this city on that part, is so encroached upon by building of filthy cottages, and with other purpressors, enclosures and laystalls (notwithstanding all proclamations and acts of Parliament made to the contrary), that in some places it scarce remaineth a sufficient highway for the meeting of carriages and droves of

cattle." There were inconsiderable suburbs on the north; on the north-west there were streets and dwellings around Smithfield and Clerkenwell, but the chief extension was along the river, east and west. A continuous line of buildings stretched from Temple Bar to Westminster, along the river front, consisting chiefly of palaces and mansions. On the east, from the Tower, stretched a tapering finger of dwellings beyond Ratcliffe. Stow greatly deprecated these additions on the east side. He remarks that from the precinct of St Katherine's by the Tower to Wapping, "was never a house standing within these forty years;" but alas! now a continual street reached, "almost to Ratcliffe, a good mile from the Tower." Tenements in place of trees was an exchange of which Stow did not approve. "There hath been of late," he says, "in place of elm-trees, many small tenements raised towards Ratcliffe; and Ratcliffe itself hath been also increased in building eastward, in place where I have known a large highway, with fair elm-trees on both sides, that the same hath now taken hold of Lime Hurst, or Lime Host, corruptly called Lime House, sometime distant a mile from Ratcliffe." On the south, there was a fringe of building along the river bank, at the back

of which were fields and open spaces, and beyond this the country; an uninterrupted expanse of the beautiful scenery of Surrey.

With slight deductions here and there, it might be said that the whole of what is now the County of London was then open country. A man could walk westward along Holborn, and by the time he reached St Giles' Church, where now is Shaftesbury Avenue, he would be in the fields. If he went from Holborn up Gray's Inn Lane, by the time he reached King's Cross he would have left London behind him: St Pancras was a rural village. On the north, if he passed through Cripplegate, a few minutes' walk would take him through the suburbs; or if he took the road through Moorgate, by the time he had passed the Moorfields and left Finsbury fields behind him, he would have the rising country all before him, and he would very soon encounter one of the farm homesteads which supplied the city with agricultural produce.

It follows that life in Shakespeare's London was not the distinctive town-life which we associate with the London of to-day. A young man from a provincial town, used to rural sights and sounds, endowed with the love of nature, would not pine for the green

fields at home; he would take a walk into the country. He would find a forest of Arden on the heights of Hampstead and Highgate; he could take part in a sheep-shearing celebration at even a less distance. As he walked through the city on business bent, a flock of wild duck or teal might wing over his head with outstretched necks, taking flight from the marshes on the north of the city, to the river or the marshes on the south between Paris Garden and Lambeth. One of the most delightful features of the city itself, the city within the walls, was the spacious garden attached to most of the ancient houses; these gardens were well stocked with fruit-trees, and with flower-beds, cultivated for "garnishing the chambers" of the citizens' dwellings. The citizen in his warehouse or living room could hear the note of the piratical blackbird among his fruit, or the song of the thrush, or the linnet's pretty warble. If Shakespeare had his lodging in the precinct of St Helen's, Bishopgate, he would doubtless hear the cuckoo,

> "When daisies pied and violets blue,
> And lady-smocks all silver-white,
> And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
> Do paint the meadows with delight."

Or if (as we believe he did at one time) he dwelt on

the Surrey side, near the Bear Garden, the note of Philomel, "the winged Dryad" might reach him from among the trees as he lay sleepless and in thought some summer night:

"When to the sessions of sweet silent thought"

he summoned up remembrance of things past. Nature was ever calling to Shakespeare, by ear and eye, while he lived and worked in London.

But there were other and scarcely less important appeals to Shakespeare's genius. In and around the city were the precincts of dissolved priories and other religious houses: the chapel or some portion thereof generally saved for the purposes of the reformed worship; for the rest, stately ruins, cloisters, garden walks, grassy slopes and trees; here and there portions of the old buildings converted into dwellings, occasionally new houses erected on the garden spaces, in the words of Stow, "for the lodgings of noblemen, strangers born, and others." At the Theatre in Holywell, at the playhouse in Blackfriars, Shakespeare would be surrounded by these evidences of a past, not remote to him, when one of the bulwarks of London, against King and Barons alike, more strong than the wall of the city, was the secure existence of

these ecclesiastical demesnes outside the defences, from point to point round the wall, as well as within the gates. There were those living in 1590 who could have described to him the aspect of London before the Reformation; and the London which elderly men described to him as the London of their youth was very little changed from the London of the Plantagenets and the wars of the Roses. There was the Tower, and the stories of its hapless victims lived on men's tongues as well as in the Chronicles. In various quarters of the city were large houses, forsaken or turned into tenements, which had once been the town mansions of nobles whose names figured in these stories, whose descendants had built themselves dwellings outside the walls in more secure times, mostly to the west along the Strand, the Savoy, Whitehall and Canon Row. This contrast between past and present was vividly suggested to Shakespeare, for to these sumptuous dwellings of the new order the business of his calling would sometimes take him and his fellows, and here he beheld the splendour and pride of circumstance which was the atmosphere of the Elizabethan noble. Strong and new life upon a background of heaped remains of a recent past: this was what greeted Shakespeare on every hand.

The disappearance of the noble and his retinue from among the dwelling-places of the city followed the exile of monk and friar. Many a sweet choir was hushed; but Shakespeare could go into St Paul's in the evening and listen to the beautiful organ there, while the shuttle of his thought weaved the influences of this manifold London upon the texture of his mind.*

The exodus of so many of the nobility made room which was quickly taken up by the busy citizens and their artizans. Trades flourished; invention — encouraged by the Queen's grants of monopoly—was continually adding new processes to the methods of production or improving the old. The corollary of this was to be seen in the busy wharves and quays along the river front and the shipping in the Thames. The great antiquary, William Camden, who wrote while Shakespeare was a denizen of London, becomes eloquent when he speaks of the Thames as "a sure and most beautifull Roade for shipping." Hyperbole scarce consorts

* Paul Hentzner who visited London while Shakespeare was there, in describing St Paul's, says, "It has a very fine organ, which at evening prayer, accompanied with other instruments, is delightful."

with the character of Camden, and we must suppose that his patriotism only coloured his mode of expression when he wrote: "A man would say that seeth the shipping there, that it is, as it were, a very wood of trees disbranched to make glades and let in light: so shaded it is with masts and sailes."

The most significant, as it was the most conspicuous, of the new buildings in Shakespeare's London, was the bourse built by Sir Thomas Gresham, which the Queen with her wonted tact, had inaugurated in person by the name of the Royal Exchange. This was the emblem of the new commercial era which has continuously developed ever since, first slowly, and by leaps and bounds in the nineteenth century. Viewed in relation to Shakespeare the significance of the new conditions is readily seen. A settled government; the Queen resident at Whitehall or Greenwich, when not making "progresses"; the Queen's nobility attracted by the royal sunshine to new palaces westward; her nobles vieing with each other to provide her entertainment and amusement: result, Lord Leicester's company of players, to which emulation speedily added others. Then came the playhouse—a new kind of building almost as significant as the

Royal Exchange. The one was the corollary of the other.

It is very important to consider Shakespeare's employment in London and its effects upon his mind. With others, he was attached to the household or establishment of a great personality, a nobleman of proud position, of great power and privileges. Courtiers, and the fantastic mood of the court, were frequently under his observation in the royal palaces, and in the chambers and anterooms of the nobles. At the playhouse, where one of the chief objects of the performance was to perfect the players and test the attraction of plays with a view to presentations before the Queen and her nobility,—at the playhouse all classes of society were brought together in focus, as is shewn by the graduated scale of payment and accommodation; and here the opportunities for observation were better even than those afforded by Paul's Walk or Westminster Hall. And all this panorama of life and character was moving constantly beneath the eyes of one gifted with unique powers of vision, the very nature of his occupation from the first prompting him to dramatic creation, his daily work an experimentation in the methods of dramatic

composition. But all these opportunities would have been vain, without genius: there are limits beyond which Shakespeare cannot be viewed as a product.

It is probable that had it been adequately known how many-sided was the life of London as it presented itself to Shakespeare, how full of variety in a small compass, some of the books that have been written to prove he was a lawyer or some other profession; that he must have been on the continent, especially to Italy; that he must have made an ocean voyage in a ship, or what not, might not have seen the light, which would be regrettable, for there is no honest or sane book on the subject of Shakespeare which is not worth reading. We need not study Hakluyt's voyages to know where Shakespeare learned his sea-lore, or whence he derived those stories of ocean travel and mishap which we find in the Comedy of Errors, in the Winter's Tale, in Twelfth Night, in the Tempest. We need not go beyond Shakespeare's London for these. East of the bridge, on both sides of the river, but especially the Middlesex side, as far as Ratcliff and beyond to Limehouse, were the resorts of sailors, and the purveyors and victuallers of ships.

Here could be met men who had sailed with Drake or with Raleigh. Drake's old ship was there, and is frequently alluded to in the literature of the time, notably by Hentzner, although it is characteristic of Shakespeare's method that he does not allude to it by name. But compare the artistic result of Shakespeare's creation in his marine scenes with that of *Eastward Hoe*, a contemporary play in which Drake's ship and the humours of the pool of London have their part. There simply is no comparison, although it is probable that *Eastward Hoe* was vastly entertaining to the Elizabethans. The one is ore, the other refined gold.

The river Thames was the chief highway of Shakespeare's London. The royal barge conveyed the Queen from Whitehall to her palace at Greenwich, followed by a procession of barges and boats bedecked and trimmed with flags and streamers, bearing her ladies and attendants, the royal bodyguard, halberdiers, and officers of the royal household. When nobles paid their visits of ceremony, they went by boat or barge. Merchants on business, from wharf to wharf, from Paul's to the Tower or beyond, went by water, or if their business lay in Southwark, they used one of the numerous ferries in

preference to the Bridge. Pleasure-seekers crossed by ferry from the city to the theatres and other diversions of Paris Garden and the Bankside; or they hired wherries at the nearest stairs and were rowed across. There were thousands of watermen earning their living by hire on the silent highway; and these watermen or scullers were recruited from the mariners of England. From this source stories of foreign ports or cities would come to Shakespeare's ears almost without his seeking. It is probable, too, that even before the publication of his poems, and consequent personal conversation with Lord Southampton, Lord Pembroke and others, he had opportunities of hearing young gallants, who made the "tour" in accordance with a custom of the time, comparing notes on their experiences in Germany, in Paris, or in the Italian cities. And thus the names of Padua, and Messina, of Verona, of Milan, of Mantua, with their associations of romance and distance, may have struck upon the ear of Shakespeare, amid London surroundings, while the creations of his genius were taking form and shape. Of one proud city he would doubtless hear from various sources, especially from sailors and boatmen, a city like unto London in that it

was ancient and splendid, though more august; and like in that it was a mighty mart and a great port—the Queen of the Adriatic.

The first time that the moving picture of the Thames burst upon the vision of young Shakespeare is a psychic moment which must be left to the imagination of the reader. It is fortunate for us that his contemporary Visscher made his picture of London from a point on the Surrey side; he shows us the most important relation that existed between the town and the river. His picture, of which a much reduced facsimile accompanies these pages, is absolutely reliable. It enables us to look upon a scene on which the eyes of Shakespeare frequently rested. You may imagine him on the Bankside, watching the boats and wherries and barges as they passed through the shadows cast by the buildings, listening to a boatman's story of the wondrous city of the waters, its waterways and its gondolas; and you may be sure that a resemblance which quickly suggests itself to you was not missed by Shakespeare. A modern poet begins a beautiful description with the lines:

> "I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs,
> A palace and a prison on each hand. . ."

Visscher's picture shows that equivalents of these were prominent features of Shakespeare's London. The Bridge has, on the west the Queen's palace of Whitehall, on the east the Tower ; Paul's may represent St Mark's.

CHAPTER II

THE ENGLISH HISTORICAL PLAYS

In one respect these plays resembled the life of Shakespeare: their incidents and scenes were laid in various parts of the kingdom, but they centralised themselves in London. The plays mirrored the catastrophic process which preceded the emergence of the Tudor dynasty, and the advent of the Renaissance in England; the aspect of London was a tangible illustration of the change. The scenes of the last of the series of historical dramas, Henry VIII., are laid in London, in the period preceding the destruction which followed upon the Reformation. This was the very time to which Shakespeare's elders in London looked back with fond regret. Notably we find this was the case with Shakespeare's elder and contemporary, John Stow, the great historian of London. The "palmy days" owe a good deal to the harmonizing effect of time, no doubt, and pictures of youth dwell in the memory

with colours that become more lustrous, as age advances. Nevertheless, it is important for us to know that among the generation of Londoners, whose lives spanned the change from old to new London, as it seemed to them, these traditions were current, and Shakespeare was in a position to have heard stories of the golden time, when nobles with their retinues dwelt among the citizens, and stately religious establishments contributed to the beauty and the dignity of the city.

The circumstances suggest a picture to the mind's eye of young Shakespeare walking through the city in the company of the reverend and devoted Annalist. In 1590, Stow would have been sixty-five years of age, and Shakespeare twenty-six, and while it is possible that the elder may thus have imparted to the younger the story of the streets and buildings of London, there is no evidence that such was the case. So much has perished in 300 years, and where we most look for confirmation, too often there is a hiatus, and Clio is baffled. As for such a possible relation between Stow and Shakespeare, it must be added that two circumstances tell somewhat against it; the first being that in the composition of his historical plays Shakespeare did not use Stow's

"Summarie of English Chronicles," or his "Annales," but the Chronicles of his rivals, Holinshed and Edward Hall. The other circumstance is that in his Survey of London, first printed in 1598, Stow has very little to say about the theatres. He mentions the Theatre and the Curtain in Shoreditch, but he does not allude to the Blackfriars playhouse, which was in existence in 1596, nor did he include it in the subsequent edition of 1603. The famous Globe Theatre he altogether omits, and the probability is that the patriotic and conservative citizen, John Stow, shared the views of the city authorities with regard to the stage.

But the fact that Shakespeare and Stow were simultaneously living and working in London, is one of great interest, and, whether they were personally acquainted or not, it is certain that in one respect they were moved by a common impulse. Men in that age were conscious of the blessings of internal peace; they looked back upon the broils and contentions which had preceded it; they looked forward in the future to the peaceful development of trade and industry. The nation was in the mood to take account of itself. Peace and leisure and the printing press afforded the means, and men of learning and

devotion were not wanting. William Camden produced his great history and survey, the famous *Britannia*, and Norden projected and partly executed a similar design. John Stow, a tailor of London, worked at the Chronicles of his country, and finally relinquished his business to enable him to accomplish his patriotic and self-chosen task. In this he had rivals and suffered some injustice; but when he set to work upon his Survey of London, in which the stores of knowledge he had accumulated for his Chronicles and Annals enabled him to place the history of the city in relation to the history of England, he produced a book which was beyond competition.

It belongs to the epic character of Shakespeare's achievement that he participated in this general movement. Among the earliest of his dramas we find the two plays on the subject of the Contention between the Houses of York and Lancaster, or the wars of the Roses. The plays were produced under the title of Henry VI., on the common stage, as it was termed, that is to say, in a public theatre, where all classes of the community were admitted on payment. Striking thus into the spirit of the age, the plays were enormously successful. The evidence of this exists in the Diary

of Philip Henslowe, the manager of the theatres in which the plays were produced, and Shakespeare's contemporary, Nash, wrote the following testimony in his *Pierce Penilesse*, 1592:

"How would it have joyed brave Talbot (the terror of the French) to thinke that, after he had lyen two hundred yeare in his toomb, he should triumph againe on the stage, and have his bones new embalmed with the teares of ten thousand spectators at least, at severall times, who, in the tragedian that represents his person, imagine they behold him fresh bleeding."

Working like the thorough artist he was, Shakespeare completed the story in Richard III., and showed the inauguration of the new era on Bosworth Field. It is probable that the tragedian, who acted so movingly the part of Talbot, in Henry VI., was Edward Alleyn; but when the later play was produced, Shakespeare had cast in his lot with the Burbage association, the Chamberlain's company, and the character of Richard of Gloucester, as acted by Richard Burbage, became the greatest dramatic success of the time. Shakespeare now added to his historical series, dramas in the reigns of Richard II., and Henry IV. In these the development of his genius is clearly apparent, and the chronology of the

historical plays could be determined by their relative power.

Of the plays mentioned, many scenes were laid in London. This was not so much the case in the play of King John, or in that which followed on the reign of Henry V., wherein so much of the action takes place on French soil. But in the last of the historic group—chronologically the last, and the completion of the series—we are in Tudor London and Westminster, almost throughout the play, amid scenes which may have been described to Shakespeare by elderly men when he came to London.*

When plays were printed in Shakespeare's lifetime, the changing locale of the play was not indi-

* The playhouse copy of Henry VIII. was probably consumed in the fire which destroyed the Globe Theatre on the occasion of its production. Three years later Shakespeare died, without, we must suppose, having re-written this play. With regard to the existing drama, as a matter of opinion, and accepting the critical tests, the conclusion I have formed is this: That the managers of the King's company obtained the services of other authors to supply them with a play on the subject, in which recollections of Shakespeare's play became incorporated, either by the dramatists themselves, or by the editors of the folio of 1623, who, as we know, took part in the representation when the fire occurred. The scenes of the play, in all likelihood, remained as Shakespeare had laid them, in London and Westminster.

cated, as we are accustomed to see at the head of each scene in modern editions. The scenes, it is true, are often derivable from the text, but by no means invariably so; they were added in editions subsequent to the first collected edition of 1623. The source of these additions was dramatic tradition, which, in respect of its reliability, resembles those oral traditions which transmit intact the folk-tales and the ceremonial rites of earlier conditions of society. In Shakespeare's day, a written or printed notice told the audience where the scene was supposed to be. When the players surrendered their copies to author and printer, the plays were printed as literature; the scene headings and the stage directions to which we are accustomed did not appear. These were incorporated from theatrical tradition at a later date. We may, therefore, assume that a place-name which meets our eye in a modern edition of the plays, originally appeared on the stage when the play was produced. What did such indications convey to the Elizabethan playgoer, when the scenes were laid in London? That is the question to which we must address ourselves.

The phrase "old London" did not convey to Shakespeare and his contemporaries the meaning it

conveys to us. No general conflagration had yet devastated the city, although occasional outbreaks of fire had wrought havoc here and there. The increase and the change which had taken place in London since the suppression of the monasteries cannot be compared with the vast demolitions and reconstructions which have almost transformed London in the reign of Queen Victoria. They did not, in the reign of Elizabeth, cherish a few isolated remains of antiquity; London as a whole was substantially what it had been in the first half of the reign of Henry VIII., and the London of the Tudors was substantially the London of the Plantagenet era. Houses, or the sites of houses, which had been residences of feudal lords, still retained, in many cases, the names of their proud owners; the sites of monasteries and priories were marked as precincts and liberties, and the stones of London were memorials of English history.

Let us take the historical plays chronologically, and while we note the London scenes, we will try if we can realise in some degree what the conventional indication on the stage conveyed to the Elizabethan audience.

The opening scene in King John is laid in

"King John's Palace." This has been supposed by some editors to mean the King's palace at Northampton. Without being in the least disputatious, it is allowable to refer the reader to the text. A sheriff enters and tells the king there is the strangest controversy "come from the country" to be judged by him. The disputants are Philip Faulconbridge and his brother; and presently Philip says to Queen Elinor, "Our country manners give our betters way." These are indications that the two youths had come up to London from Northamptonshire to lay their case before the king. In Shakespeare's time there was a tradition, mentioned by Stow, that a certain house, called Stone House, in Lombard Street, was formerly King John's House, and it is at least probable that the London playgoer would interpret the legend, "King John's Palace," as referring to this house. In this case, the Sheriff who came in to make the announcement to the king would be understood as being a sheriff of the city. Philip's ridicule of his half brother, later in the same scene, culminates in a derisive allusion to an unpopular addition made to the coinage in 1561: "Look where three farthings goes!" The subsequent soliloquy of Philip on his knighthood is an obvious satire on contemporary

snobbism. In IV. ii. the scene is again King John's Palace, and Hubert's description of the consternation "in the streets," at the news of Arthur's supposed death, would certainly appeal to the groundlings as a London scene. The whole character of Philip is a tribute to a popular hero, Richard of the Lion Heart.

Passing now to Richard II., we find that London is much more conspicuously the background of the play. The first scene is "King Richard's Palace," and the audience may have understood by this the ancient palace of the kings at Westminster. On the other hand Richard had more intimate connection with the city than many English sovereigns; and traditions of the time when he was living in the Tower Royal may possibly have directed the minds of the audience to that building, which was in existence in Shakespeare's time, though no longer used as a royal residence. Stow tells us that "this Tower and great place was so called of pertaining to the kings of this realm," and that when King Richard had overcome and dispersed the rebels in Smithfield, he and his lords and all his company "entered the city of London with great joy, and

went to the lady princess his mother, who was then lodged in the Tower Royal, called the Queen's Wardrobe." Stow remarks that the building at that period must have been "of good defence"; for when the rebels got possession of the Tower of London the princess (the widow of the Black Prince) fled to the Tower Royal "and remained safe"; and it may also be supposed, he adds, that the King himself was that time lodged there.

Stow gives evidence that the king was in residence there five years later, in 1386, concluding with these words: "This for proof may suffice that kings of England have been lodged in this Tower, though the same of later time have been neglected and turned into stabling for the king's horses, and now letten out to divers men, and divided into tenements." Finally, it may be noted that, in the chronologically later plays, when the scene is the royal palace, it is not qualified by the sovereign's name as in King John and Richard II., but appears as "The Palace," or "Westminster, the Palace," or "London, the Palace."

The second scene of the play is the "Duke of Lancaster's Palace." This was the Savoy, and there

can be no doubt that the audience would identify it as such. It was one of the most famous sites in London, and rich in historic associations. It was linked with memories of the French wars of Edward III., with the martial achievements of the Black Prince, with Crecy and Poictiers. Stow tells us that "Henry, Duke of Lancaster, repaired, or rather new built it, with the charges of fifty-two thousand marks," and that "John, the French King, was lodged there in the year 1357, and also in the year 1363; for it was at that time the fairest manor in England." Wat Tyler and his rebels had an especial grudge against John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. Stow tells a story of his flight from the city, whither, it would appear, the Duke had taken refuge. His palace of the Savoy was burnt by the rebels, "unto the which there was none to be compared in beauty and stateliness"; all plate and vessels of gold and silver, "which was in great plenty," were broken in pieces and cast into the river; all precious stones were bruised in mortars, "that the same might be to no use." It is not certain if the Duke resided there afterwards, and the date of the play is subsequent to the rebellion. Henry VII. rebuilt the place as a hospital and religious

establishment, and there were considerable remains of the old palace in Shakespeare's time.

In the fourth scene of the first act Bushy comes and tells the king that the duke is suddenly ill, and entreats Richard to visit him. "Where lies he?" asks the king. "At Ely House," Bushy replies; and the second act opens there.

Ely House is alluded to in a later play, Richard III.; Ely Place, Holborn, marks the site at the present day. It was the London residence of the Bishops of Ely. The house was rebuilt, says Stow, by Thomas Arundell, Bishop of Ely, who "augmented it with a large port, gatehouse, or front towards the street or highway. His arms are yet to be discerned in the stone-work thereof."

The fourth act opens in Westminster Hall, the magnificent scene of the deposition of Richard. The Hall was greatly enlarged, repaired, and beautified by this king in 1397. He kept Christmas there in 1398 in a splendid and lavish manner, recorded by Stow, and in the following year it was the scene of his deposition. In Stow's words: "The old great hall being new built, Parliaments were again there kept as before: namely, one in the year 1399,

for the deposing of King Richard II." It was familiar to Shakespeare, to Londoners, and to most educated Englishmen as the scene of the administration of justice, the various courts of law, and the Star Chamber.

The opening scene of the last Act is "London, a street leading to the Tower." The queen, entering with ladies, says,

> "This way the king will come; this is the way,
> To Julius Cæsar's ill-erected tower."

The Tower existed in Shakespeare's day substantially as it was in the period of his historical plays; the limited extent of London renders it exceedingly unlikely that the aspect of the building was not familiar to every playgoer; the wild beasts kept there were famous beyond the shores of this country. When the queen meets Richard, and, shocked at his despair, endeavours to rouse his mind, the prospect of the Tower suggests the following simile:

> The lion dying thrusteth forth his paw
> And wounds the earth, if nothing else, with rage
> To be o'erpower'd; and wilt thou, pupil-like,
> Take thy correction mildly . . .
> Which art a lion and a king of beasts?

Two scenes later we have a glimpse of the madcap Prince, Bolingbroke's son:

> "I would to God, my lords, he might be found:
> Inquire at London, 'mongst the taverns there,
> For there, they say, he daily doth frequent,
> With unrestrained loose companions,
> Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes
> And beat our watch, and rob our passengers."

These lines foreshadow many scenes in the succeeding plays of Henry IV. So rich are these plays, not only in London scenes, but in allusions to the London of Shakespeare's own time, that it will not be possible to do more than notice some of the more important features.

The pranks of the madcap Prince and the inimitable humours of Falstaff have made Eastcheap and the Boar's Head Tavern familiar as household words. To enjoy those scenes it is not necessary to have an exact knowledge of the locality; yet will we try if we can, in imagination, realise what the scene-notice "Eastcheap" called before the mind's eye of the Elizabethans in the play-house.

North of the Bridge, which appears with great clearness in Visscher's View, was Bridge Street, in which was a fish market, whence the street was more commonly known as New Fish Street. Down in

Thames Street on our left (going north) is Fishmongers' Hall, clearly drawn and labelled in the view. The ground rising, as we advance (as it does at the present day), we come to Fish Street Hill. Bearing in mind that the present bridge is several yards more west than the bridge familiar to Shakespeare, we find that the locality has not altered altogether in its main outlines. Formerly New Fish Street was nearly if not quite in a line with Gracechurch Street, or, as it was known to Shakespeare, Grass Street, from the grass and herbs market there. Standing on Fish Street Hill, and looking north, Great Eastcheap is on our left, and on our right is Little Eastcheap.

"In New Fish Street," says Stow, "be fishmongers and fair taverns, on Fish Street Hill and Grass Street men of divers trades, grocers, and haberdashers." The name East Cheap was derived from the market there, in contradistinction to the market in Cheapside, known as West Cheap. "This Eastcheap," writes Stow, "is now a flesh market of butchers there dwelling on both sides of the street." On the east side of Fish Street Hill was the parish Church of St Margaret—"a proper church," says Stow—and from the south side of this church a footway passed

to Rothes Lane—"or Red Rose Lane, of such a sign there, now commonly called Pudding Lane"—and this lane ran from Little Eastcheap to Thames Street, east of London Bridge.

Now it is with Great Eastcheap that we are chiefly concerned, and the Boar's Head Tavern there.

The statue of William IV. which looks towards the present bridge marks the site of the Boar's Head. It was in Great Eastcheap, one of four taverns which occupied the space between an alley and St Michael's Lane, which led down to Thames Street, to the wharves—Drinkwater Wharf and Fish Wharf—shown in Visscher's view, between Fishmongers' Hall and the Bridge. Letting the eye travel slowly upward from these wharves, the reader will see (slightly eastward of a line between Fishmongers' Hall and the Bridge) a small church tower, which his present guide takes to be St Michael's Church in Crooked Lane, which was the way from this network of lanes and alleys to Fish Street Hill. Now the back of the Boar's Head looked upon the churchyard of this St Michael's Church; the front of the tavern, of course, in Eastcheap.

Eastcheap and Fish Street Hill abounded with taverns in Shakespeare's time; but in the period of

Henry IV. there were no taverns in the neighbourhood. Stow, in telling the story of the King's sons supping in Eastcheap in 1410, and of the subsequent "great debate, between their men and other of the court," which was appeased by the mayor, sheriffs and citizens, adds the following note: "The king's sons beaten in Eastcheap: there was then no taverne in Eastcheape." He tells us, however, that "it had sometime also cooks mixed amongst the butchers, and such other as sold victuals ready dressed, of all sorts." In another place he tells us of the houses at which wine was sold in olden times, but no victuals served. Hence the Boar's Head in Henry IV. was an anachronism; but what did that matter to Shakespeare's audience, who knew the tavern in Eastcheap?

Surrounded by markets,—the grass market on the north, the fish market on the south, the meat market on the west,—open to the receipt of all commodities from the wharves of Billingsgate eastward of the bridge, this hostelry was in the way to afford excellent entertainment to man and beast. Could we desire better surroundings for honest Jack Falstaff? And would Shakespeare's audience have missed the wit of thus fitting the character and the locality? While the groundlings roared at the sallies of the fat

knight, the more judicious must have seen in him an epitome of London tavern humour, a *genius loci* very largely embodied.

It does not in the least detract from the art of Shakespeare if we assume that this character was based on observation, and not evolved from the inner consciousness of the poet. The germ of the conception may be seen in the minor character of Sir John Fastolfe in Henry VI., a play which was produced some few years prior to Henry IV. Sir John's cowardice doubtless afforded a moment of comic relief in that play (Part I., Act III. Sc. ii.). This was the kind of hint never lost on Shakespeare, and that process of development, in the treatment of character types, to which attention has been repeatedly drawn in Mr Gollancz's prefaces to the Temple Shakespeare, predisposes us to expect a recurrence and reappearance in some form.

When these plays were printed in Shakespeare's life-time, the two elements of which they were composed—the historical drama and "the humorous conceits of Sir John Falstaffe"—were distinguished on the title-pages; and the many contemporary allusions in the Falstaff portions, especially the London allusions, suggest that no attempt was made

by the author to synchronize this element of the play with the serious portions. There can be little or no doubt that Falstaff was appreciated in the theatre as an admirable portrait of contemporary humour. So successful was it, that theories as to some living original were started and discussed, much as we have known in the case of both novels and plays in our own time. The following words, among the earliest utterances between the Prince and Falstaff, occur very soon after their appearance in the play :—

Falstaff. . . . And is not my hostess of the tavern a most sweet wench ?

Prince. As the honey of Hybla, my old lad of the castle. . . .

Fastening on this epithet, the quidnuncs of the time evolved the theory that the author intended to make still more ridiculous a worthy whose memory had already suffered some indignity on the stage in a play called after him, "Sir John Oldcastle." At the end of Henry IV., Shakespeare expressly disclaims any connection between this person and his fat knight. Who was Falstaff? Compounded of some recollections of undeveloped character in an earlier play with Shakespeare's observations in

London streets and taverns, was there any person in especial whose character and aspect may have suggested the outline?

Describing the west end of Tower Street, Stow, after mentioning a house and its associations with Jack Cade, proceeds:

"Next to this is one other fair house, sometime built by Angell Dune, grocer, alderman of London, since possessed by Sir John Champneis, alderman, and mayor of London. He built in this house a high tower of brick, the first that I ever heard of in any private man's house, to overlook his neighbours in this city. But this delight of his eye was punished with blindness some years before his death. Since that time, Sir Percevall Hart, a jolly courtier, and knight-harbinger to the queen, was lodged there."

The west end of Tower Street was not far from Eastcheap. This tower must have been visible from thence, and from the terms in which Stow alludes to it, we may perceive that it was a notorious object. The Knight Harbinger was an officer of the royal household, whose business it was to arrange for the proper accommodation of the court when the sovereign made progresses or journeys. Such an officer would be likely to be well known by the noble and aristocratic portion of the audience, for

the progresses of the queen were liable to involve a somewhat heavy tax upon the hospitality of her subjects, and the Knight Harbinger would sometimes have need of his jollity under the circumstances. Did the epithet "old lad of the castle" refer to this personage and this tower in Tower Street?

With this suggestion of a possible original outline of Falstaff existing in Shakespeare's London, we must needs defer many remarks on what may be termed Falstaff's London, and briefly notice another passage in Henry IV. (Pt. I., III. i.) which rang familiarly to an Elizabethan playgoer:

Hotspur. Not yours, in good sooth! Heart! you swear like a comfit-maker's wife! 'Not you, in good sooth,' and 'as true as I live,' and 'as God shall mend me,' and 'as sure as day.'

And givest such sarcenet surety for thy oaths,
As if thou never walk'st further than Finsbury.
Swear me, Kate, like a lady as thou art,
A good mouth-filling oath, and leave "in sooth,"
And such protest of pepper-gingerbread,
To velvet-guards and Sunday-citizens.

We are not, in this day, apt to associate the Percys of the North with the city of London; but

in Shakespeare's time it was otherwise. On the west side of St Martin's Lane, in the parish of St Anne, almost by Aldersgate, says Stow, "is one great house, commonly called Northumberland House. It belonged to H. Percy. King Henry IV., in the 7th of his reign, gave this house, with the tenements thereunto appertaining, to Queen Jane his wife, and then it was called her Wardrobe. It is now a printing house." This sequestration followed upon the unsuccessful rebellion whose story is told by Shakespeare in his play. The house was known as Northumberland House to Shakespeare and his contemporaries; the meaning of "then it was called her Wardrobe," being that it was so called in the Queen's time. Afterwards the old name was revived: "it is commonly called Northumberland House," says Stow.

It was while living here that young Hotspur was supposed to have made those observations of the mode in which the wives of citizens made their asseverations. The modern equivalent of walking no farther than Finsbury would be no farther than the Park; the fields of Finsbury were a favourite recreation ground and promenade in the sixteenth century, and possibly also in the early fifteenth; but it

was more important for Shakespeare's purpose that his illustrations should find an echo in the minds of the audience than that they should be strictly consistent.

The play of Henry V. is occupied mainly with the wars in France and the triumph of Agincourt. There are, however, one or two points in connection with London which may briefly detain us, before we pass on to Henry VI. and Richard III.

If an editor, three hundred years hence, should be editing a play of the present time, in which occurred various allusions to the game of lawn-tennis, he would have little difficulty, by rummaging among *fin de siècle* periodicals, in finding how fashionable the game has been with us; he would probably come across a book containing directions for playing, and would be able to explain all allusions to 'sets,' 'serving,' 'fifteen, love,' ''vantage all,' and so on. Tennis was a very fashionable game in Shakespeare's time, and in Henry V. (I. ii.) we have a pretty scene in the Dauphin's present of tennis balls to the future hero of Agincourt. We have allusions to 'rackets,' playing a 'set,' 'the hazard,' 'a match,' 'a wrangler,' 'courts,' and 'chaces.' In the pages of John Stow we read of tennis-courts in the

city of London—as, for instance, one on the site of the demolished house of the Crouched (or Crossed) Friars, the present Crutched Friars; and at Whitehall, opposite the palace, on ground now covered with government offices, were "divers fair tennis-courts, bowling-alleys and a cockpit, all built by Henry VIII."

The allusion to the return of the Earl of Essex from Ireland (in the Prologue to Act V.) is a further instance of Shakespeare's mingling of past and present in his later historical plays. The image of an imminent event is thus brought up before the audience:

> . . . . But now behold
> In the quick forge and working-house of thought
> How London doth pour out her citizens!
> The mayor and all his brethren in best sort. . . .

If Essex (the idol of the Londoners at this time) disbarked at Tilbury or Blackwall, the Mayor and all his brethren might go forth to meet the victorious general at Mile-end Green.

In the plays Henry VI. and Richard III., the Tower figures largely. Its history is given by Stow, and many of the striking events in connection with the citadel most probably formed subjects for the

story-teller at London firesides. Stow summarizes his history and description thus :

"This Tower is a citadel to defend or command the city ; a royal palace for assemblies or treaties ; a prison of state for the most dangerous offenders ; the only place of coinage for all England at this time ; the armoury for warlike provision ; the treasury of the ornaments and jewels of the crown ; and general conserver of the most records of the king's courts of justice at Westminster."

Norden's map shows several pieces of large ordnance outside the Tower walls in East Smithfield. Indeed, the Londoner of Shakespeare's day had ample opportunity to become familiar with the arms of war. In the Minories—in place of the nunnery formerly so called—"is now built," says Stow, "fair and large storehouses for armour and habiliments of war, with divers' workhouses, serving for the same purpose" ; and he elsewhere mentions a gun foundry, Houndsditch, "for casting of brass ordnance." In Bishopgate was Artillery Yard, "whereunto the gunners of the Tower do weekly repair—namely, every Thursday ; and there levelling certain brass pieces of great artillery against a butt of earth, made for that purpose, they discharge them for their exercise."

In the opening scene of Henry VI., Gloucester says:

> " I'll to the Tower with all haste I can,
> To view the artillery and munition,"

and in sc. iii. the scene is "Before the Tower," whither Gloucester has come to effect his purpose. He is anticipated and prevented by the Cardinal of Winchester. In the exchange of defiance which ensues, Gloucester refers to the Cardinal's "indulgences to sin," adding: "I'll canvass thee in thy broad cardinal's hat"; and presently he cries, "Winchester goose, I cry, a rope! a rope!"

All these allusions were not to the town of Winchester itself, but to Winchester House, the Bishop's London residence on the Bankside, and to the jurisdiction of the Bishop within a considerable area there. The "indulgences to sin" referred to the Stews or licensed houses which were afterwards suppressed by Henry VIII., and at the present day there is an alley, called Cardinal cap alley, which nearly marks the site of these houses. In Shakespeare's time there was a tavern here, called the Cardinal's Hat.

The mayor reads the riot act and disperses the opponents with their followers, adding—"I'll call for

clubs, if you will not away." This call for clubs need not be explained to those who have read *The Fortunes of Nigel*. The citizens enjoyed the right of combining in force to uphold the privileges of the city and to maintain the peace; and it was a right in the exercise of which the apprentices and youths of London found much delight.

The scene of the plucking of the red and white roses by representatives of the rival houses (II. iv.) is laid in the Temple gardens. Let us set down the direct allusions to the place:

Suffolk. Within the Temple hall we were too loud;
The garden here is more convenient.
Plantagenet. He bears him in the place's privilege.
Warwick. . . .
And here I prophesy: this brawl to-day,
Grown to this faction in the Temple garden
Shall send between the red rose and the white
A thousand souls to death and deadly night.

Every Londoner in Shakespeare's day knew the Temple and its gardens, and the privileges of the place. The notice on the stage and the allusions in the play were sufficient to enable the audience to realise the scene. The majority of those present would remember the rebuilding of the great hall of

the Middle Temple, in 1572, "in the reign of our Queen Elizabeth," as Stow has it.

The following scene is at the Tower; and Mortimer's description of his imprisonment would appeal to the audience more intimately than it does to us at the present day. "But tell me, keeper," says Mortimer, "will my nephew come?"

First Gaoler. Richard Plantagenet, my lord, will come;
We sent unto the Temple, unto his chamber.

These words called up one of the familiar features of Shakespeare's London, the Inns of Court, the abode of lawyers and students of the law. "Herein," says Camden, in his *Britannia*, "such a number of young gentlemen doe so painefully ply their books, and study the law, that for frequency of students, it is not inferiour either to Angiers, Cane, or Orleance it selfe, as Sir John Fortescue in his small Treatise of the lawes of England doth witnesse. The said foure principall houses are, The Inner Temple, the Middle Temple, Graies Inne, and Lincolnes Inne."

The second part of Henry VI. is so rich in London scenes and allusions that we must make a selection. The scene of II. ii. is "London: the Duke of York's Garden."

York. Now, my good lords of Salisbury and Warwick,
Our simple supper ended, give me leave
In this close walk to satisfy myself,
In craving your opinion of my title,
Which is infallible, to England's crown.

To the Elizabethans there was nothing extraordinary in the idea of a large garden with close walks, attached to a nobleman's dwelling in the city. Stow describes, for instance, Northumberland House, in the parish of St Katherine Coleman, Aldgate ward, the residence of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, in the reign of Henry VI., which "of late being left by the earls, the gardens thereof were made into bowling alleys, and other parts into dicing houses." There were others that could be named. These gardens and the remains of gardens testified to the time when the great feudal lords had their London residences amidst the citizens. The garden wherein this scene was laid was attached to Baynard's Castle, a palace and stronghold which had once served for defensive purposes at the S.-W. extremity of the city wall. The building is shewn in Visscher's View; it is immediately to the west of Paul's wharf, also marked. Stow records that the Castle was burnt in 1428, and rebuilt by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. "By his

death and attainder," continues Stow, "in the year 1446, it came to the hands of Henry VI., and from him to Richard, Duke of York, of whom we read, that in the year 1457 he lodged there as in his own house."

The rebellion of Cade, terminating as it did in an irruption into the city, was well remembered in London traditions, and the course of events has been closely followed by Shakespeare (Act IV. *passim*). In the assembly of the rebels on Blackheath, the humorous power of the master is already apparent. The attack upon London is in prospect, and there are some anticipatory allusions to the capital which must be noticed briefly. In one of his "asides," Dick says of Cade, "for his father had never a house but the cage." This probably refers to the prison in Southwark called "the Cage." Presently Cade, in the course of his communistic harangue, says, "and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass." In a later scene, when the rebels are in Smithfield, Dick asks: "My Lord, when shall we go to Cheapside and take up commodities upon our bills?" "Marry, presently," says Cade.

The term Cheapside here is somewhat of an anachronism. In the period of the play it was still

Cheap—West Cheap. All the north side was open ground, on which booths and stalls were placed, the keepers of which lived elsewhere, for no houses were yet built on this side of Cheap. It is supposed that the existing street names in Cheapside—Milk Street, Wood Street, Bread Street, Friday Street (probably from fish being sold there)—indicate the parts of Cheap where these commodities were sold. About the middle of Cheap stood the Standard, a large stone structure, for delivery of water from the Conduit. Sometimes executions took place at or near this Standard. "In the year 1450, Jack Cade, captain of the Kentish rebels, beheaded the Lord Say there," says history, by the pen of John Stow. In the Smithfield scene of the play, Cade orders the execution thus: "Go, take him away, I say, and strike off his head presently; and then break into his son-in-law's house, Sir James Cromer, and strike off his head, and bring them both upon two poles hither." A large house called the Green Gate in Lime Street was sacked by the rebels; and at another house, in Mincing Lane, where Cade was entertained and feasted, says Stow, the rebel captain, "when he had dined, like an unkind guest, robbed the owner of all that was there to be found worth the carriage."

The progress of the rebels is made known (IV. iv.) by messengers who come to the Palace and report to the King, first that the rebels are in Southwark, next that they have carried the bridge:

"Jack Cade hath gotten London Bridge!
The citizens fly and forsake their houses:
The rascal people, thirsting after prey,
Join with the traitor, and they jointly swear
To spoil the city and your royal court."

The following scene is at the Tower. Lord Scales appears on the Tower walls; and citizens come to him with a message from the Lord Major beseeching him to defend the city. We learn not only that the bridge is taken, but that the Tower itself has been attacked; and the governor is anxious about its defence. "But get you to Smithfield and gather head," says his lordship, and promises to send a contingent thither under command of Matthew Goffe.

Now comes the scene (IV. vi.) wherein Cade, followed by his rebels, strikes his staff on London Stone, and declares, "Now is Mortimer lord of this city." In modern editions the scene is described, "London, Cannon Street." This is wrong, and in this case the scene-description is not a direct descendant of the orginal stage-notice. In Shakespeare's time

and before, the street was Candlewick Street. "On the south side of this high street," writes Stow, "near unto the channel, is pitched upright a great stone called London Stone, fixed in the ground very deep, fastened with bars of iron, and otherwise so strongly set, that if carts do run against it through negligence, the wheels be broken, and the stone itself unshaken." The stone is to be seen to-day in Cannon Street, it is true, built into the wall of St Swithin's Church, nearly opposite Cannon Street Railway Station. Its original position is described on a memorial entablature above the stone as 35 feet S.W. from the spot where it is so happily preserved; but in the period of the play and in Shakespeare's own time this was in Candlewick Street.

The following scene is in Smithfield. This was most probably East Smithfield, not far from the Tower. Matthew Goffe and his party have come to attack the rebels as promised by Lord Scales; but all are slain, whereon Cade: "So, sirs: now go some and pull down the Savoy; others to the inns of court: down with them all." But the Savoy and the inns of court, which suffered under Wat Tyler's rebellion, escaped. Cade's power soon fell from him, as portrayed in the next scene (IV. viii.), which is laid in Southwark. Probably we are to understand that

this is after an unsuccessful attempt to burn the bridge (threatened in a previous scene). We gather from Stow that there was a fight on the bridge, and that the rebels were repulsed. This accounts for their being in Southwark again. The scene opens with fighting, and Cade is urging his followers:

"Up Fish Street! down St Magnus' Corner! kill and knock down! throw them into the Thames!"

As they were on the south side of the river, and these places named were on the north, he was evidently urging them to retake the bridge. Fish Street (or Bridge Street) led up from the Bridge towards Eastcheap, and St Magnus' Corner refers to the Church of that name at the bridge's foot. The Church and Fish Street still exist, and enable us to measure the distance the bridge was moved westward when it was rebuilt.

Cade on the one hand, and Clifford and Buckingham on the other, contend for the sway of the multitude. Cade, addressing his "rabblement," says: "Hath my sword therefore broke through London Gates, that you should leave me at the White Hart in Southwark?"

He had broken through two gates, one at either end of the bridge. One of the defences was a

drawbridge, and this was probably overcome by frightening the warders. The rebel leader made his headquarters at the White Hart Inn, and in doing so made a good choice. Next to the Tabard it was the best inn that side of the river. But this was the end of his triumph and good living; the next scene but one shows him a famished fugitive; and brave and boastful to the last, he is killed by the comfortable and well-fed Iden.

In Lytton's *Last of the Barons* there is a striking description of the Earl of Warwick in his London house—perhaps castle would be the more appropriate term, for the grim Earl is pictured among his armed retainers, himself in arms, an air of soldierly watchfulness and readiness over the whole place. The Earl's house was in Downgate, between Walbrook and the Thames, not far distant from London Stone. Stow describes it thus: "On the east side of this Downgate Street * is the great old house called the Erber, near unto the church of St Mary Bothaw.† Geoffrey Scroope held it by the gift of Edward III., in the 14th of his reign. It belonged since to

* Represented in the present Dowgate Hill by the side of Cannon Street Station.

† Now united with St Swithin's, London Stone. The railway covers the site of both the church and the house.

John Nevell, Lord of Raby, then to Richard Nevell, Earl of Warwick; Nevell, Earl of Salisbury was lodged there in 1457; then it came to George, Duke of Clarence, and his heirs male, by the gift of Edward IV., in the 14th of his reign. It was lately new built by Sir Thomas Rellison, Mayor, and was afterwards inhabited by Sir Francis Drake, that famous mariner."

The house inhabited by Sir Francis Drake would undoubtedly be known to every Londoner; the rebuilding of the house within recent years would have drawn attention to its earlier historic associations. When one thinks of it, this must have been one of the most famous houses in Shakespeare's London, formerly the residence of the great King-maker, latterly of England's heroic admiral. No scene in the play (third part of Henry VI.) is laid in Erber House, but it is highly probable that the Elizabethan audience saw it in the background of the play. Indeed, one of the most remarkable features in this play is its indication of the power of the city, and of its preference for the Yorkist cause. The Duke of York occupied Baynard's Castle, by the river, and Warwick held Erber House, not far from Downgate wharf. These

two strongholds, which between them would accommodate a large number of soldiers, represented far greater power within the city than was possessed by the government of Henry VI. If the peace or security of the city were threatened by the unpopular Queen and Protector, the good Duke and the grim Earl would defend them. This is the state of balance when the play opens. The victors at the battle of St Alban's, the York party, had

> ". . . . with colours spread,
> March'd through the city to the palace gates."

It was a triumphal march amidst the congratulations of the citizens. The defeated side have followed after; the two parties are now face to face in the "Parliament House." Clifford is for a precipitate assault upon the Yorkists there and then, but Henry says:

> "Ah, know you not the city favours them,
> And they have troops of soldiers at their back."

When the compromise has been agreed to, York takes his leave, saying, "I'll to my castle,"—Sandal Castle, we learn from the next scene. But Warwick says, with promptitude and significance,

> "And I'll keep London with my soldiers."

An interesting London scene, which Shakespeare did not bring into his play, is described by Stow. He records that on the 28th February 1460, the Earl of March (afterwards Edward IV.) and the Earl of Warwick entered the city of London with a great power, and was joyously received. On the 3rd March following, the Earl of Warwick mustered his people in St John's Field—this was beyond Smithfield, in Clerkenwell. The day was Sunday, and little doubt there was a large attendance of the citizens. Here the Earl produced an indictment against Henry's government, and put it to the meeting whether Henry were worthy to reign longer: "whereunto the people cried Nay." Then it was put to the meeting "whether they would have the Earl of March for their king; and they cried, Yea, yea. Whereupon certain captains were appointed to bear report thereof unto the said Earl of March, then being lodged at his castle of Baynard."

In Shakespeare's play the compromise between the houses is quickly followed by the battle of Wakefield, the death of the Duke of York, and the defeat of his party. Anon the battle of Tewksbury and the triumph of the Yorkists. The caprice and weakness of Edward, and the consequent

estrangement of Warwick follow. The Earl thinks he can take the city with him in his change of sides. He has replaced Henry in the regal chair; news comes that Edward has landed with a foreign force; Warwick must leave the weak king, and beat back this danger.

> My sovereign, with the loving citizens,
> Like to his island girt in with the ocean,
> Or modest Dian circled with her nymphs,
> Shall rest in London till we come to him.

But Warwick away, the city's preference for the Yorkists asserts itself. Edward, Gloucester, and their followers enter the palace, and Henry is haled off to the Tower. Then comes the Battle of Barnet and the death of Warwick. Gloucester suddenly leaves the field of battle:

> "I'll hence to London on a serious matter."
> *Clarence.* What? what?
> *Gloucester.* The Tower, the Tower.

The next scene is in the Tower, and Richard of Gloucester murders Henry, thus clearing from his path the only remaining Lancastrian impediment between him and the diadem.

In the succeeding play—called Richard the Third, although it embraces the reigns of Edward IV.,

Edward V., and Richard—the connection between the House of York and the city brings London very conspicuously forward as the scene of the enactment of English history. The Duke of Clarence would be living in Erber House at the time of his committal to the Tower in the opening scene. The Duke of Gloucester had a London residence, Crosby Place, hard by the nunnery of St Helen's, Bishopgate. The progress of Clarence from Erber House would be by Candlewick Street (now Cannon Street), and Gloucester may have walked down from Crosby Place, and met the prisoner in Candlewick Street or Walbrook.

In the following scene, another street, we have the funeral of the murdered Henry.

> " Come now towards Chertsey with your holy load,
> " Taken from Paul's to be interred there."

Richard, we may imagine, after watching his brother Clarence pass on towards the fateful Tower, had lingered in Candlewick Street, in expectation of the funeral cortege; the destination, Chertsey, suggests that he may have intercepted the procession on its way from the cathedral to Paul's wharf. It is noticeable that directly after the above utterance of

Lady Anne, Gloucester enters, and commands the bearers to set down the corse, twice enforcing his command with oaths, "by Saint Paul." The frequency of Gloucester's oath, "by St Paul" (it occurs some seven times in the play), may very probably have had some reference to the Cathedral Church, and may have expressed a sentiment upon the connection of the fortunes of his house with the city. It is quite conceivable that he might cherish some such superstitious idea, the last rag of religion.

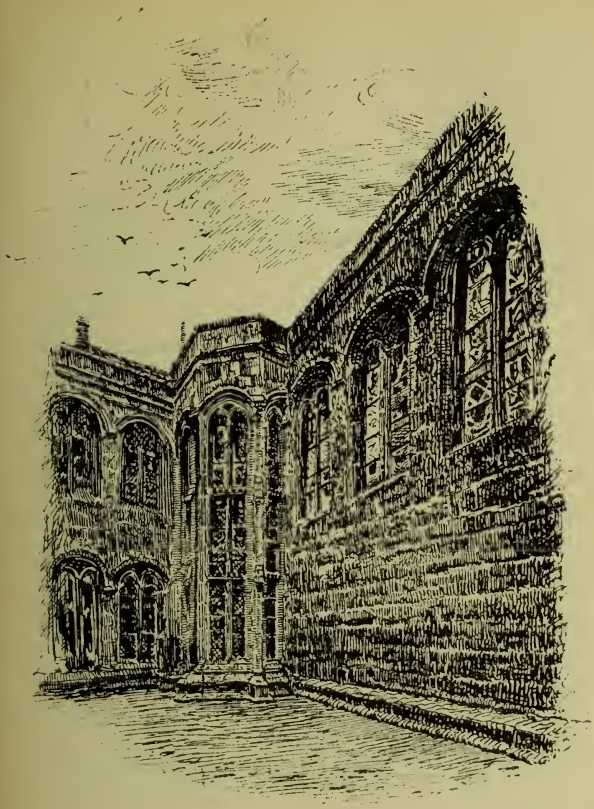
The opening scene of this play affords an excellent opportunity for exhibiting a picture of Plantagenet London. Without referring to current events, it may be said that when the play was produced at the Lyceum Theatre, twenty years ago, the stage picture represented the end of a street, a corner gable casting a shadow, a sun-dial in the foreground. Bells were ringing; and how characteristic was this ringing of bells in Plantagenet and early Tudor London has been eloquently told by Sir Walter Besant. The sun was shining brightly in the street beyond the gable-end and in the foreground; presently a shadow was cast on the wall of the street, a moving shadow, and Richard, passing through the shadow of the gable, steps out into the sunlight as he comes towards

the dial, and then the bells cease. The figure of the Duke, not ignoble though deformed, and the flashing eye from a pale, intellectual face athwart a cluster of dark locks, emerging from this street of ancient London, formed a living picture of history never to be forgotten. There was the incarnation of the spirit of strife, burdened with the memory of all the horrors of the Wars of the Roses, made inhuman by deeds of human cruelty inflicted and sustained; possessed by a demon of vengeance and fell ambition. Such a scene, under differing conditions, was presented to Shakespeare's audience when Burbage was the Richard. The audience was assembled in a play-house, arranged so that all might see and hear; the scenery of the play, until it moved off to its denouement on Bosworth Field, was contemporary London itself. There was not a great difference between the London of Richard the Third and London in Shakespeare's own time. The notice on the stage—"London, a Street"—sufficed for the Elizabethans; but in our day, knowledge and art must supply that which in Shakespeare's day could be conjured up by a word.

Two London buildings which figure prominently in this play were well known to Shakespeare. They were

Crosby Place (I. ii., iii., III. i.), and Baynard's Castle (III. v., vii.). That the poet lived in St Helen's precinct, almost under the shadow of Crosby Place, is shown in a subsequent chapter; and Baynard's Castle was no less familiar to him. The Blackfriars Theatre, where many of Shakespeare's plays were produced, and in which the poet shared the cares and rewards of management, was within a stone's throw of the castle. Moreover, Shakespeare's patron, the Earl of Pembroke, resided there. Stow expressly tells us: "This castle now belongeth to the Earl of Pembroke." That Shakespeare became attached to the neighbourhood we may infer from his subsequent purchase of a house near Puddle wharf, hard by the castle. It pleases the imagination to recall the figure of the poet as he regarded these buildings, and brooded on their historic memories, shaping some of those scenes which are so vital even to us at this distance of time.

Of Crosby Place, Stow tells us succinctly that it was built by Sir John Crosby, a city magnate, about 1466. "This house he built of stone and timber, very large and beautiful, and the highest, at that time, in London. He was one of the sheriffs, and an alderman in the year 1470, knighted by Edward



CROSBY HALL, FROM THE ENTRANCE INTO CROSBY SQUARE

IV. in the year 1471, and deceased in the year 1475; so short a time enjoyed he that his large and sumptuous building." Besides Richard of Gloucester, Stow mentions various successive owners of Crosby Place, of whom it is possible that two may have suggested dramatic associations to Shakespeare; Anthony Benvice, a rich merchant of Italy, and in 1586, "Henry Ramelius, chancellor of Denmark, ambassador unto the queen's majesty of England from Frederick II., the king of Denmark."

The history of Baynard's Castle went back to the Conquest. The holders of the Castle were the "Chasteleans" or "chief bannerers" of London; their feudal service took place at St Paul's, and the banner there given into their hands bore the image of St Paul. The citizens claimed the west side of St Paul's churchyard as common ground, "that they might there assemble themselves together, with the lord of Baynard's Castle, for view of their armour, in defence of the city." The connection of the House of York with the Castle has already been noticed, and the probable origin of Gloucester's oath, "by St Paul," has been alluded to. But in Richard III. the significance of place, in the scene at Baynard's Castle, is perhaps of even greater interest. Here Richard

represents all the traditions of his house, and of the Castle itself, in connection with the city of London; and in choosing Baynard's Castle as the scene of his persuasion to accept the responsibilities of kingship, Richard showed good judgment. Shakespeare follows history in this scene, and he shows an appreciation of the associations of the place. The opening words of the scene (spoken by Richard to Buckingham), are words which former owners of the Castle must often have used: "How now, my lord, what say the citizens?" And almost the only words spoken by the mayor (to Richard) are these: "Do, good my lord, your citizens entreat you." The phrase, "your citizens," was reserved exclusively for the sovereign of the realm, and Richard has not yet accepted sovereignty. Addressed to him, however, as head and representative of the House of York, in Baynard's Castle, the form of address was perhaps not inappropriate. It is probable that, in Shakespeare's time, this scene, as given on the stage, became charged with satirical meaning by the actors, in revenge upon the city's persistent persecution of the theatres.

The use made by Richard of the city authorities is all unfolded with dramatic rapidity, in three suc-

cessive scenes (III. v., vi., vii.). Apart from the traditional connection of the House of York with the city, and the city's reliance upon that connection, the point of view suggested is undoubtedly a contrast designed to throw into relief the brilliant cleverness of the unscrupulous Richard. This point of view is clearly indicated in the brief scene in the street (vi.), when the Scrivener appears with a paper in his hand.

> This is the indictment of the good Lord Hastings ;
> Which in a set hand fairly is engross'd,
> That it may be this day read o'er in Paul's.

The scrivener perceives the villainy at work, and in the succeeding lines, demonstrates it as grossly apparent. Yet the city has connived, and the indictment is about to be read in public, presumably by the city's recorder. The situation suggested is interesting, historically, turning as it does upon the co-existence of the sovereign power with that of the city in the Tower of London, and furnishing an instance of the use occasionally made of the Cathedral Church for political purposes.

Not far from Baynard's Castle, in Paul's Wharf Hill, was "Darby House," probably often seen by Shakespeare. At this house he lays a scene (IV. v.). Writing of Derby House, Stow mentions the Stanleys

as former owners, "for Thomas Stanley, first Earl of Derby of that time, who married the Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond, mother to Henry VII., in his time built it." The house was given by Queen Mary to the Heralds, and it became the college of Arms, whither Shakespeare may have gone in quest of the well-known and disputed coat of arms for his family.

The palace of the Bishops of Ely in Holborn has already engaged our attention in connection with the play of Richard II.; there is an interesting allusion to it in Richard III. (III. iv.).

Gloucester. My lord of Ely!
Ely. My lord?
Gloucester. When I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there:
I do beseech you send for some of them.
Ely. Marry, and will, my lord, with all my heart. [*Exit.*

To the modern ear there is something almost comic in this association of strawberry-beds with Holborn. In Shakespeare's day, however, it was perfectly congruous. It is even probable that when the young Shakespeare first came to London from Stratford he may have caught sight of strawberries growing in the garden of Ely House, as he passed down Holborn towards the Newgate, by which in

every likelihood he first entered the city. At the time this play was produced all the district now covered by Ely Place and Hatton Garden formed the garden, 40 acres in extent, of Ely House. Between the suburb of Holborn and Newgate was Oldborne Bridge, over a stream called Turnmill Brook. Two objects conspicuous in this thoroughfare were Oldborne Cross, and a famous water conduit built by William Lamb in 1577. This triumph of mechanical science and art, achieved by Lamb, is described by Stow: "The water thereof he caused to be conveyed in lead, from divers springs to one head, and from thence to the said conduit, and waste of one cock at Oldborne Bridge, more than two thousand yards in length." Westward of Ely House was Leather Lane, "turning into the field," says Stow: that is to say, the suburb ceased in this direction, a little way down this lane. Then came Furnivall's Inn, formerly the property of Sir William Furnivall, but in Shakespeare's time an inn of chancery. Beyond this was the Earl of Bath's Inn, "now called Bath Place, of late for the most part new built." On the other side of the way were Thavies Inn, opposite Ely House, Fewter (Fetter) Lane, Barnard's Inn, and Staple Inn. The latter,

says Stow, is for a great part thereof of late fair built, "and not a little augmented." The houses still happily in existence on either side the Gateway in Holborn are almost the sole surviving specimen in London of the street architecture of the period when Richard III. was produced. It was a street of such houses, between the bars and Holborn Bridge, the old cross and the new conduit in the midst, which was suggested to the mind's eye of the audience by Gloucester's allusion "when I was last in Holborn."

It is astonishing and delightful to find how many names, once familiar to Shakespeare, have survived to greet our eyes in the streets of Victorian London. In his day Whitefriars was a notorious locality, in character greatly altered since the period of Richard III., and to-day a street name testifies to the site. Here was the Whitefriars monastery, to which Gloucester commanded the body of Henry should be borne (I. ii.).

Gloucester. Sirs, take up the corse.
Gentleman. Towards Chertsey, noble lord?
Gloucester. No, to Whitefriars; there attend my coming.

But in Shakespeare's time the monastery and its

STAPLE INN, HOLBORN

church were things of the past. "In place of this Friars church," says Stow, "be now many fair houses built, lodgings for noblemen and others." In the ruinated refectory of the monastery a theatre was fitted up to minister entertainment to these residents and to any visitors whom the performances might attract. The ancient right of sanctuary had merged into a recognised secular privilege, and between Whitefriars and the Temple was the notorious Alsatia which figures so largely in Sir Walter Scott's story of *The Fortunes of Nigel.*

The scenes in the Tower in this play, the murder of Clarence, the sudden cutting off of Hastings, the smothering of the tender Princes, make up a very apotheosis of horror. If the purpose of tragedy is ever achieved—to purify through terror and pity—the effect of this play must have been very wholesome upon the wielders of sovereign power. The state prison becomes what Hastings calls it, a slaughter-house, and the play might well have been named the Tragedy of the Tower. The fortified walls, the moat, the water-gate, and the drawbridge, are objects of curiosity to us, but to Shakespeare's contemporaries they were the emblems of a fearful fate. The German Hentzner, in his account of his visit to

London at this time remarks that of the political prisoners who once entered the Tower few if any again tasted freedom.

As a play of English history, Richard the Third would have gained in interest, had Shakespeare introduced one of the religious houses among its scenes. The element is not wholly absent, but suggested rather than shown.* In III. v. Gloucester sends for Doctor Shaw and Friar Penker; in IV. ix. the queen says her daughters "shall be praying nuns." From Gloucester's previous reference to Whitefriars, we may suppose that Friar Penker was a Carmelite brother of Whitefriars monastery. There were various orders of nuns, well-remembered in Shakespeare's London; perhaps the order of St Clare, "the Minoresses," whose establishment retains an echo in the name of the Minories at the present day, or the nunnery of St Helen's, Bishopgate, would be the more likely to have occurred to Shakespeare's audience. In the background of the play, these religious establishments were sufficiently suggested, in contrast to the rigours and the tragic gloom of the Tower.

* In the recent reproduction at the Lyceum it was shown with great skill by setting III. i., in the cloisters at Westminster, a beautiful scene.

In the play of Henry the Eighth the action takes place almost entirely in Westminster, Whitehall and Blackfriars.* The first scene of the play is described as "London: an ante-chamber in the palace," and III. i. as "London: the Queen's apartments." The locality of the other palace scenes is not mentioned; they are described simply as "the palace," "ante-chamber in the palace," and so forth. Perhaps we should be right if we inferred that in all these cases the royal palace at Westminster was to be understood. But we cannot be certain, because the king sometimes resided at the palace of Bridewell, and it is to be remarked that London, and not Westminster, is mentioned as the *locale* of the palace at the outset of the play.

Bridewell was in Bride Lane, Fleet Street. It was, says Stow, "of old time the king's house, for the kings of this realm have been there lodged."

* There is an allusion to the city in I. ii. 152-6:—

> The Duke being at the Rose, within the parish,
> Saint Lawrence Poultney did of me demand
> What was the speech among the Londoners
> Concerning the French journey. . . .

In Shakespeare's time the Merchant Tailors' School occupied this house, "The Rose," in Suffolk Lane, "sometime belonging to the Duke of Buckingham" (Stow). Cunningham went wrong on this point (*s.v.* Lawrence Poultney).

Henry VIII. rebuilt the old house and made it a palace, "stately and beautiful," to receive the Emperor Charles V., in 1522, who "was lodged himself at the Blackfriars, but his nobles in this new-built Bridewell, a gallery being made out of the house over the water, and through the wall of the city, into the Emperor's lodging at the Blackfriars." In 1524 a parliament was begun at Blackfriars and finished at Westminster, known as the Black Parliament. The king himself was often lodged in the new palace of Bridewell, and at another parliament held at Blackfriars in 1525, "he created estates of nobility," duly set forth by Stow. "In the year 1528 Cardinal Campeius was brought to the king's presence, being then at Bridewell, whither he had called all his nobility, judges, and councillors, &c. And there, the 8th November, in his great chamber, he made unto them an oration touching his marriage with Queen Katherine." In another place Stow records that in 1529 Cardinal Campeius, the legate, with Cardinal Wolsey, sat at Blackfriars, "where before them, as legates and judges, was brought in question the king's marriage with Queen Katherine, as unlawful, before whom the king and queen were cited and summoned to appear." And

elsewhere we learn from Stow that at the time of this trial the king and the queen were lodged at Bridewell.

Bridewell remained a royal palace until 1553, when Edward VI. gave it to the commonalty and citizens of London, "to be a workhouse for the poor and idle persons of the city," and endowed it with land, bedding, and furniture appertaining to the Savoy hospital. So that in Shakespeare's time Bridewell, although a workhouse, or house of correction, would probably be remembered as a royal residence, and Blackfriars, as the scene of the great divorce case, would probably be associated in living memory or recent tradition with one of the chief interests of the play. The stage notice of the scene (II. iv.), "a hall in Blackfriars," conveyed something to the Elizabethan audience. The surrounding wall of the monastery was still standing; the precinct was a fashionable residential quarter, and here was the famous private theatre called the Blackfriars.

York Place, afterwards called Whitehall, was originally the palace of Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent, and for many generations it had been the London residence of the Archbishops of York. At the time of the play it was in the hands of

Wolsey as Archbishop of York, and one of the scenes is "a hall in York Place" (I. iv.). The events by which this house became forfeited to the king, as a consequence of the indictment in Premunire, afford some of the dramatic interest of the play. Henry changed the name to Whitehall, and he added to the building a sumptuous gallery and a beautiful gatehouse, fronting towards St James Park. "In this gallery," says Stow, "the princes, with their nobility, used to stand or sit, and at windows, to behold all triumphant joustings and other military exercises." The name of the street from Charing Cross to Whitehall is not given by Stow, but probably the modern Parliament Street follows the line of the original thoroughfare. On the right-hand side of the way, says Stow, "are divers fair houses lately built before the park, and then a tilt-yard for noblemen and others to exercise themselves in jousting, turning and fighting at barriers." Thus we may gather the tiltyard was immediately opposite the gallery and gatehouse.

The street in which II. i. takes place led from Westminster Hall to the river. The procession which attended the condemned Duke of Buckingham

probably passed under the arched gate on the east side of the courtyard of the palace; this arched gate led to the river, "with a fair bridge and landing place," says Stow. This scene was admirably represented at the Lyceum Theatre when Henry VIII. was performed there.

A subsequent scene is laid in the courtyard of the palace (V. iv.). There are some allusions to London places in this scene which must be briefly noticed. The Porter, addressing the rabble, asks: "Do you take the court for Paris Garden?" The allusion is to the noise and tumult they are making, and the point of the question was obvious enough to a seventeenth century audience. At Paris Garden, in the period of the play and earlier, the King's bears were kept for baiting—"the royal pastime,"—and there were public exhibitions of the sport in an amphitheatre on the Bankside, to which the Londoners, especially the unruly sort, flocked on Sundays and holidays. This amphitheatre was rebuilt in the year 1613, and appears in Visscher's View as "The Bear Garden." The sport, cruel and gross as it was, was the occasion of much noise and tumult, cracking of whips, barking of the dogs as they attacked the bears, shouts and cries of the keepers, above all the din of

the excited beholders, as they screamed and yelled at the poor dumb combatants. Presently the Porter's attendant says:

> "Pray, sir, be patient: 'tis as much impossible—
> Unless we sweep 'em from the door with cannons—
> To scatter 'em, as 'tis to make 'em sleep
> On May-day morning; which will never be:
> We may as well push against Powle's as stir 'em."

The celebration of the May festival in London in ancient times was enthusiastic and general, not only countenanced by the authorities, but encouraged, aided, and abetted by them. The setting up of the principal maypole on Cornhill was a public occasion of rejoicing and triumph. Each parish had its "maying," and sometimes the parishes united their respective "mayings," "and did fetch in maypoles," says Stow, "with divers warlike shows, with good archers, morris dancers, and other devices, for pastime all the day long." Since the year 1517, when there was an insurrection against aliens on May Day, the custom had been less of a public function; but in Shakespeare's time the observance was still general, and the lines quoted above suggested a familiar picture of the youths and maids of the city setting forth before daylight into the meadows

and woods around London, to return laden with May, hawthorn, and spring flowers.

That St Paul's (Powle's) should be employed as symbol of immovability was natural enough; its size and prominence in Shakespeare's London may be seen in Visscher's View. Prince Hal says of Falstaff: "This oily rascal is known as well as Paul's."

Anon the Porter demands of the rabble—"Is this Moorfields to muster in?"—Outside the north-eastern part of the city wall there was a large open space made up of Moorfields and Finsbury Fields; here the city musters took place, and the train-bands drilled and practised shooting at the butts.

Presently the Porter's man accidentally hits a woman, "who cried 'Clubs!' when I might see from far some forty truncheons draw to her succour, which were the hope o' the Strand, where she was quartered." The "hope" of the Strand would equate with the "hopefuls," *i.e.*, the apprentices. The cry of "Clubs!" was the rallying cry of the London apprentices. "These are the youths," says the Porter, "that thunder at a Playhouse and fight for bitten apples; that no audience but the tribulation

of Tower-hill or the limbs of Limehouse, their dear brethren, are able to endure." There was no playhouse in London at the period of the play; the allusions were contemporary.

The subsequent entry of the Lord Chamberlain might conceivably have been originally a joke of the players. Before 1603 the premier company of actors were "the servants of the Lord Chamberlain," the association of which Shakespeare was a member. His lordship rebukes the Porters and asks, "are all these your faithful friends o' the suburbs?" This phrase, as applied to the playgoers of Shakespeare's London, is used also by Ben Jonson. It is a question which the Lord Chamberlain might have asked his company on an occasion of rowdyism at the playhouse.

A few lines later there is an allusion to the Marshalsea prison. Stow describes three prisons in Southwark, of which this was one. It was so called, "as pertaining to the marshals of England."

Before leaving this play a word must be added in honour of one of the characters, Sir Thomas Lovell, who left his mark on London. He built the Weigh House on Cornhill, "where merchandise brought from beyond the seas are to be weighed at the

LINCOLN'S INN GATEWAY

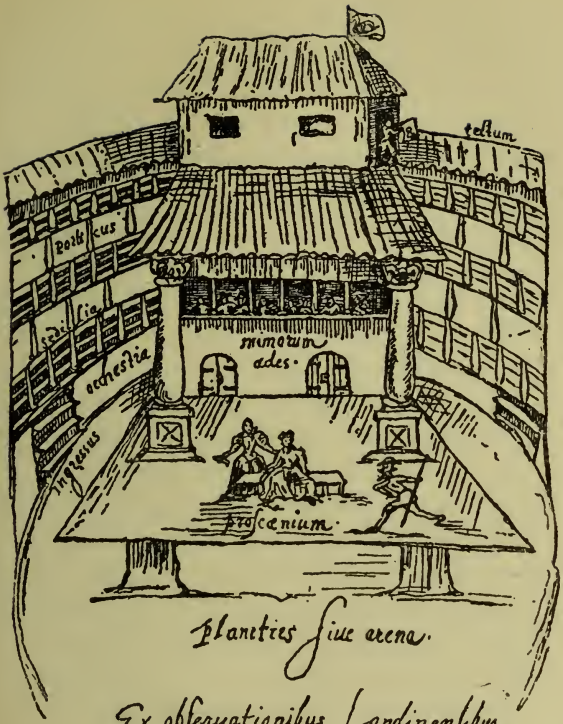
king's beam." He rebuilt and endowed Holywell Priory, Shoreditch. As late as 1798 the arms of Henry VI., which had been set up in the Priory buildings by Sir Thomas, were still visible on the front of a house two doors from the end of Holywell Lane. But the chief memorial of him is the gateway of Lincoln's Inn, on which the eyes of Shakespeare must often have rested when he came to visit Lord Southampton at Southampton House, a few yards distant. This gateway—happily still existing—bears the date 1518. It is one of the few buildings in London which carry us back to Shakespeare's time, and beyond Shakespeare to pre-Reformation London.

We have now taken a view of some of the historic sites and buildings outside the playhouse walls in Shakespeare's London, which served as the scenes of his historical plays. The restricted size of London suggests that these would be well known to the audience. That there was much living tradition concerning the events and persons associated with those sites and buildings we may gather from the pages of John Stow, who, notwithstanding his love of records, of parchments, rolls, and books, frequently condescends to notice these traditions,

and occasionally even to include them in his survey.

The wide difference between Shakespeare's London and ours is perhaps already sufficiently apparent. In Shakespeare's time, London and London life was the perpetual background of the playhouse. It was not many years since the playhouse had been brought into existence. Before that, plays were presented in inn-yards, amid London scenes and London life. Now, is it not clear that if these plays were presented at the present day without scenery, the scene-notice in our programme (equivalent to the notice on or above the stage in Elizabethan times) would not convey to us what it conveyed to the audience in Shakespeare's London? As we become more and more remote from the time and the conditions of the original production of the plays, it has been found more and more necessary to provide, by the means of scenery, a picture which shall be to us what the mind's eye was to the Elizabethan playgoer.

A brilliant and learned dramatic critic of our time has defined the drama of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England as the "drama of rhetoric," and he has pointed to the playhouses



INTERIOR OF OLD SWAN THEATRE

and stages of that period to illustrate his generalisation.* The reproduction here given of the picture of the interior of the Swan Theatre will readily enable the reader to appreciate the general conditions under which Shakespeare's plays were originally presented. The stage is a platform coming out into the body of the playhouse, and the doors for exits and entrances are at the rear. The process by which the stage has receded to its present position, with the auditorium all before it, has been a gradual process. Even after the Restoration, the stage projected some distance beyond the proscenium, with tiers of boxes above, and at particularly sonorous passages the actors would come out upon this platform and declaim with gestures and attitudes in the traditional style of rhetoric. Surely the development has been continuous. As the conditions of life have become changed, the production of masterpieces belonging to a former age has suggested the revival of the original background by means of arranged and set scenes; the scenic artist has become evolved by the division of labour; and the result marks a

* I quote from memory, but the criticism occurred in one of the many articles contributed by Mr A. B. Walkley to the *Speaker*.

great advance in mimic and dramatic art. Originally the scenery was outside the playhouse, familiar to the audience, easily recalled by words. Now that result is achieved by art; we see on the stage what the Elizabethan saw outside the playhouse.

CHAPTER III

NATURE AND LONDON

"God Almighty first planted a garden, and, indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man, without which building and palaces are but gross handyworks." Thus wrote Francis Bacon at the beginning of his Essay "Of Gardens," and it is the persuasion of the present writer that he made all his notes for this Essay, as a refreshment to his spirit, in intervals of leisure spent in London gardens within an easy walk from his chambers in Gray's Inn. His thought swells with his theme, and he conceives the idea of a garden which should have a division for each season, so that the owner "may have *ver perpetuum* as the place affords." He fills these divisions with "the things of beauty," proper to each month of the year, and he closes his most interesting catalogue of flora with the remark: "These particulars are for the climate of London."

The age of Elizabeth produced its great man for almost every conceivable form of achievement: a great sailor, a great poet, a great physician, and not to continue the catalogue, it even produced a great botanist. This was John Gerard, whose *Herball* was published in 1597. This great work—great in bulk as well as in point of achievement—does for the flora of England what Camden's *Britannia* does for its history and antiquities. Gerard was employed by Lord Burleigh in the superintendence of his gardens in the Strand and at Theobald's in Hertfordshire. In his book he speaks of having been thus engaged for twenty years, whence it is probable he had settled in London in or before 1577. He was a member of the Court of Assistants of the Barber Surgeons, and in 1596 he was commissioned to seek a better place for a "fruit ground" than that in East Smithfield or Fetter Lane. He himself lived in Holborn, and had a garden there (probably attached to his house) of considerable size, if we may judge by the number of plants and trees mentioned in the *Herball* as growing "in my garden." The garden in Fetter Lane may have been Gerard's garden; but the suburb of Holborn

was chiefly made up of gardens, and the fruit garden in Fetter Lane may have been distinct from Gerard's own ground. On the northern side of Holborn was the garden of forty acres attached to Ely House.

But Gerard was concerned in yet another great London Garden. Subsequent to the publication of the *Herball*, viz., in 1602, Queen Anne, the Consort of James I., granted Gerard a lease of a plot of two acres of ground, belonging and adjoining on the east part of her mansion-house called Somerset House, "also Strond House," abutting on the south upon the bank or wall of the river Thames, and on the north upon the back of tenements standing in the High Street called the "Strond." The lease is granted in consideration of Gerard's "singular and approved art, skill, and industry in planting, nursing, and preserving plants, herbs, flowers, and fruits of all kinds."

The scheme of Gerard's book leads him to mention where he has found specimens of the genera described, and in numerous instances the locality is London or the country around London. Very frequently the habitat of the herb, flower, or grass is "my garden"; but he specifies other London gardens besides his

own. It will help us somewhat in our endeavour to realise Shakespeare's London if we divest our minds as far as possible of all memories of the metropolis as it exists now, and call to mind some ancient provincial town comparatively untouched by competition and the modern builder, where the old houses retain the large gardens of a more leisurely age, and nature occupies goodly spaces between human habitations. This was the case in the city in Shakespeare's day, although Stow complains that in some quarters, but these chiefly in the eastern suburbs, the town had become sadly "pestered" with buildings. But it is evident to readers of Stow's *Survey* that he was thoroughly conservative, and to him the golden age of London was the London of his youth, when the spacious settlements of the religious orders were oases of almost pastoral peace in and around the city.

Stow seems to take it for granted that every house must have a garden, and he does not tell us much of the gardens attached to the merchants and traders in all parts of the city. If he could have had any prevision of the time when London would have miles of houses without a single garden, perhaps he would have given us some particulars of the citizens' gardens

while describing the houses and the streets in which they were situated. Happily, however, his *Survey* is by no means barren of mention of London gardens, and before we proceed to consider the flora of Shakespeare's London, it will be convenient to take some account of the gardens and spaces which are incidentally mentioned by Stow.

In Bishopgate was a "large and beautiful house, with gardens of pleasure, bowling alleys, and such like," called mockingly "Fisher's Folly," because the builder, Jasper Fisher, had not means adequate to the house "being so large and sumptuously built." The house subsequently became the residence of the Earl of Oxford, and, says Stow, "the Queen's majesty Elizabeth hath been lodged there." In Lime Street, Stow had knowledge of a great house on the west side, once belonging to the Lord Nevill, with a chapel on the south and a garden on the west, "which garden is now called the Green Yard of the Leadenhall." There was a glorious garden in Austin Friars, adjoining Broad Street. When the house of the Augustine Friars was dissolved, Sir William Paulet, Lord Treasurer of England, appropriated the extensive site to the purposes of a princely residence. The south gate of the monastery was still standing, and

probably the "long and high wall of stone," which Stow describes as enclosing the north side of the large garden, east from Currier's Row, a turning out of Broad Street, was one of the original walls of the demesne. "Through this garden, which of old time consisted of divers parts, now united, was sometime a fair footway," saith Stow. This path led by the west end of the church, straight north, and it had gates at either end, locked up every night. But in Stow's time the footway was "taken into these gardens," and the gates closed up with stone. This caused a good deal of inconvenience to the public, but the owner of a mansion like Paulet House was a great and influential personage, and he had his way. People going northward were obliged to go round by St Peter's Church and the east end of the Friars' Church, "and all the said great place and garden of Sir William Paulet to London wall, and so to Moorgate." The house stretched to the north corner of Broad Street, "and then turneth up Broad Street all that side to and beyond the east end of the said Friars' Church." The establishment of the Augustine Friars was one of the largest and most beautiful in London; the house built by the Lord Treasurer Paulet in its stead, with its enclosed gardens, must

have been one of the largest mansions in the city. It covered the whole site formerly occupied by the house of the Friars, the cloister, the gardens, and other appurtenances. The Church of the establishment was not pulled down. The west end, "enclosed from the steeple and choir, was in the year 1550 granted to the Dutch nation in London, to be their preaching place," and so it has continued till the present day. The fate of the other part of the Church is a good illustration of the change wrought by the Reformation. The other part of the Church, Stow tells us—the steeple, choir, and side aisles to the choir adjoining—the Lord Treasurer "reserved to household uses, as for stowage of corn, coal, and other things." We may judge what its former splendour must have been, when Stow speaks of the church, thus altered and mutilated, as a large church; the steeple—which had been divorced from the sacred edifice—he describes in these terms of admiration: "a most fine-spired steeple, small, high, and straight; I have not seen the like."

Stow gives an interesting reminiscence of the building of a large house near this Church, in Throgmorton Street, by Thomas Cromwell, who performed so many effective services for the king in the process

of dissolving the religious houses. Stow's father lived here and enjoyed the possession of a goodly garden, in which was a substantial summer-house. Now, the great house of the great man being finished, "and having some reasonable plot of ground left for a garden, he caused the pales of the gardens adjoining to the north part thereof on a sudden to be taken down; twenty-two feet to be measured forth right into the north of every man's ground; a line there to be drawn, a trench to be cast, a foundation laid, and a high brick wall to be built. My father had a garden there, and a house standing close to his south pale; this house they loosed from the ground, and bare upon rollers into my father's garden twenty-two feet, ere my father heard thereof." No warning was given, nor other answer to be had save that Sir Thomas had so commanded! "Thus much of mine own knowledge," adds Stow, "have I thought good to note, that the sudden rising of some men causeth them in some matters to forget themselves."

There was a large garden near St Swithin's Church, attached to a house called Oxford Place. The church, and London Stone in Candlewick Street, lay immediately to the south. The house had once appertained to the prior of Tortington in Sussex;

since the Reformation it had served as a London residence for the Earls of Oxford, and when Stow was writing his *Survey*, it belonged to Sir John Hart, alderman. Here we have a typical declension of these London mansions. Ecclesiastical demesnes became residences of noblemen; then, in Elizabeth's reign, the fashion took the nobles westward, nearer Whitehall and Westminster; finally, unless some wealthy merchant took the reversion, the house became divided into tenements, and lost its character as a demesne. The garden of Oxford Place stretched westward to Walbrook. In the time of Henry VII., the notorious Empson and Dudley had each a house in Walbrook, of which the backs looked upon this garden, and "either of them had a door of intercourse into this garden, wherein they met and consulted of matters at their pleasures." *

The conversion of the ecclesiastical demesnes resulted as a rule in the salvage of a church — disjointed and mutilated, a torso, but still a church—and a large portion of the original gardens and open ground. The new and the converted buildings and tenements usually ranged round,

* The garden is represented to-day in the open space called Oxford Court. A passage by the side of the church leads into it from Cannon Street.

following in some measure the lines of the old buildings. Thus many a garden in Shakespeare's London existed as an ecclesiastical relic. An instance of this process is afforded in the conversion of the Priory buildings of Elsing Hospital in Gay-spur Lane, Cripplegate. The principal aisle of the Church was pulled down, and four houses erected in its place. The other part was converted into the parish church of St Alphage. "The hospital itself, the prior and Canon's house, with other lodgings, were made a dwelling-house. The churchyard is a garden plot, and a fair gallery on the cloister." These surviving cloisters, too, were a notable feature of Shakespeare's London. Not far from this Elsing precinct was the Parish Church of St Mary, Aldermanbury, "with a churchyard and cloister adjoining."

Stow mentions other gardens in this part of the town. There seem to have been many gardens in the neighbourhood of Moorgate, between Fore Street and Moorfields. In Red Cross Street, Cripplegate, Stow describes "many fair houses built outward," on the west side from St Giles' Churchyard, having "divers alleys turning into a large plot of ground called the Jews' Garden." This plot of ground, says

Stow, "is now turned into fair garden plots and summer-houses for pleasure."

In the neighbourhood of Aldersgate, in Pope Lane, was the parish church of St Anne in the Willows, "so called," says Stow, "I know not upon what occasion, but some say of willows growing thereabouts; but now there is no such void place for willows to grow, more than the churchyard, wherein do grow some high ash trees." Quite near this church, in Noble Street, was a stone wall enclosing a garden plot "before the wall of the city." This garden was "ninety-five ells in length, and nine ells and a half in breadth." At its north end was a great house once belonging to the Nevil family, but "now called the Lord Windsor's house."

We have not exhausted the gardens mentioned by Stow, but the instances given will enable the reader to realise that, small as London was in Shakespeare's time, the monotony of building was diversified on all hands by the presence of nature in the numerous gardens. The garden of the Elizabethan London house contributed largely to the garniture of the living rooms within. In place of carpets and of some accessories which to us appear to be indispensable, the floors were strewn with rushes, with

branches, and with flowers; nosegays filled the corners which are occupied with various ornaments in modern chambers. Herbs, sprays, and branches were carefully preserved for winter use; in summer flowers were the chief ornament, and on ceremonial occasions the chambers were strewn with them. There are many incidental descriptions of this custom in the dramatic literature of the time. We will select two instances from plays by Ben Jonson.

In *Every Man Out of his Humour*, II. iv., Deliro welcomes Macilente to his house. He "censes" the chamber while his boy Fido strews flowers. "That's well," says Deliro, "strew, strew, good Fido, the freshest flowers; so." The flowers came from the back garden of the house; for when his ill-conditioned wife joins them, complaining of all the scents and the flowers, Deliro rejoins:

> "But yesterday I saw thee at our garden,
> Smelling on roses, and on purple flowers;
> And since, I hope, the humour of thy sense
> Is nothing chang'd."

And in the *Poetaster*, II. i., the following may be taken as applying to London:

Albius. For Jupiter's sake, sit, sir, or please you walk into the garden? There's a garden on the back-side. . . .

Chloe. Come, bring those perfumes forward a little, and strew some roses and violets here. . . .

Various kinds of grasses and rushes were used for garnishing chambers. Gerard, in his *Herball*, notices the introduction of a new variety, which he calls Mat weede. "The people of the countries where they grow," he wrote, "do make beds of them, strawe their houses and chambers in steede of rushes, for which they do excell, as my selfe have seene in the worshipfull master Cooke his house in Holborne, which is usually strowed therewith in winter." Of the birch-tree, Gerard says: "It serveth well to the decking up of houses and banquetting roomes, for places of pleasure, and beautifying the streetes in the crosse or gang weeke,* and such like."

In the majority of cases Gerard avers generally of these London flora that "we have them in our London gardens," or "whereof most of our London gardens do possess them." Occasionally, however, he mentions the exact locality, and thus furnishes an interesting note of topography. Of the "Adders toong," he says he has seen them growing "in a medowe neere the preaching spittle adjoining to

* Rogation week, when it was a general custom to perambulate the bounds of the parish on one of the three days before Holy Thursday or the Feast of the Ascension. Before the Reformation the Procession was headed by a priest bearing a Cross. The word *gang* is Saxon = to go.

London." The "preaching spittle" was St Mary Spital, near the Artillery Yard, Bishopsgate. In place of the dissolved priory and hospital, "and near adjoining," says Stow, "are now many fair houses, built for receipt and lodging of worshipfull persons. A part of the large churchyard pertaining to this hospital, and severed from the rest with a brick wall, yet remaineth as of old time, with a pulpit cross therein, somewhat like to that in Paul's churchyard." Against the pulpit, "remaineth one fair built house, of two storeys in height, for the mayor and other honourable persons, with the aldermen and sheriffs, to sit in, there to hear the sermons preached in the Easter holidays. In the loft over them stood the Bishop of London and other prelates; now the ladies and aldermen's wives do there stand at a fair window, or sit at their pleasure." These open-air sermons at St Paul's and at St Mary Spital were typical of the open-air life of London. On the east side of the churchyard was a large field, called "Spitalfield," but in 1576 it was broken up for clay to make bricks, and in the digging a large quantity of Roman remains were found. Gerard may have seen the adders-tongue growing there, or in a meadow not mentioned by Stow. The fields and meadows still came up to

the city boundaries, save where the suburbs had grown along the highways which led out of the city.

Along Bishopsgate, on the left hand, was Holywell, the position marked by the existing name, Holywell Lane. Here a settlement or residential quarter had grown up on the site of the dissolved Priory of Holywell. Here was the Theatre, built within the precincts, the first playhouse ever built in London. Outside the precincts, a few yards nearer London, was the Curtain, another playhouse which came into existence shortly after. This little colony of residents, with the two playhouses, were surrounded by fields and meadows. The playhouses had flourished some years when Shakespeare came up to London, and here some of his earlier dramatic efforts sought the test of publicity. It is important to realise the position and surroundings of these playhouses. Gerard records the finding of a new kind of Crowfoot on this spot, which he calls "right Crowfoote," of which kind, he says, "it chanced that walking in the fielde, next unto the Theater by London, in company of a worshipfull marchant named master Nicholas Lete, I founde one of this kinde there with double flowers, which, before that time, I had not seene."

"There with fantastic garlands did she come,
Of Crow-flowers, Nettles, Daisies, and Long Purples."
—*Hamlet*, IV. vii.

The playhouses were open at the top, another indication of out-door habits in Shakespeare's London. While the performance was in progress on a summer's day, the carolling lark could be heard in the silent intervals of the play; swallows dipping in their swift flight flashed across the stage; outside might be heard the bleating of lambs.

Let us follow Gerard in his botanising rambles in another part of the town. From his own house and garden in Holborn he could readily get into the fields and meadows in quest of wild flowers and herbs. He tells us that the "wilde clarie," or "oculus Christi," was to be met with, "especially in the fields of Holburne, neere unto Graies Inne, in the high way, by the end of a bricke wall," also "at the end of Chelsey next to London." "Clarie, with purple leaves," he adds, "groweth in my garden." Thus we see how easy it was to walk out into the fields, and what ample opportunities for the observation of nature were enjoyed by Shakespeare while he lived in London. Again, Gerard tells us incidentally of fields in another direction. Speaking of the

"knottie Dogs Grasse," he says it "groweth in plowed fields and such like places, but not everywhere as the other [couch or dog's grass]: I have found of these in great plentie, both growing and plucked up with harrowes, as before is rehersed, in the fields next to Saint James' wall as ye go to Chelsey, and in the fields as ye go from the Tower Hill of London to Radcliffe."

The record of grasses growing in or upon walls, leads Gerard to make an occasional note of topographical interest. He tells us, for instance, that the Cinquefoile, or Five Finger Grasse, grew upon "bricke and stone wals about London, especially upon the bricke wall in Liver Lane." Of the Whiteblowe or Whitlowe Grasse, "the English Naile woort," he says, "it groweth plentifully upon the backe wall in Chauncerie Lane, belonging to the Earle of Southampton, in the suburbs of London." It is a pity to add a word of comment to a Shakespearian note of so much interest. We shall recur to Southampton House in a subsequent chapter, and then we will recall this back wall with this particular grass growing upon it.

Botanical names have undergone so much change since Gerard's time that it is not possible to identify

any plant save in a tentative manner. But it seems likely that "the English Naile woort," which grew on the wall in Chancery Lane, was the same as the "Navel woort or Penniwoort of the wall," which, Gerard tells us, grew "upon Westminster Abbay, over the doore that leadeth from Chaucer his tombe to the olde palace"—that is to say, the old king's palace at Westminster, as distinguished from the more recent palace at Whitehall. The "barren scarlet oak" grew in "her Majesty's garden of White Hal," he tells us, "neere to the gate that leadeth into the streete"; and of the "Herbe Two pence"—*alias* Money woort; Two pennie grasse—Gerard says: "I founde it upon the bancke of the river of Thames, right against the queenes palace of White Hall."

That Gerard curiously sought along the banks of the river in quest of specimens we learn from another note. Speaking of the wild radish, he says: "There is a kinde heereof growing in the joints or clinks, amongst the mortar of a stone wall that bordereth upon the river Thames, by the Savoy in London, the which yee cannot finde, but when the tide is much spent."

"When a' was naked, he was, for all the world, like a fork'd Radish."—*Henry IV.*, Pt. 2, III. ii.

Besides the resources of his own garden, Gerard was able to pursue his studies in the garden of Lord Treasurer Burghley, in the Strand, of which the management was in his hands. He mentions the Bladder Nut as growing there as well as in his own garden; and of the Lime or Linden tree, he notes that the male tree "groweth in my Lord Treasurer's garden at the Strand, and in sundry other places, as at Barn-elmes, and in a garden at St Katherine's, near London." Saint Katherine's was near the Tower; it is significant of Shakespeare's London that Gerard should speak of this as "near" London. The Botanist seems to have "had the run" of many of the apothecaries' and merchants' gardens. For instance, of "Madde Apples," he says: "We have had the same in our London gardens, where it have borne flowers, but the winter approaching before the time of ripening, it perished: notwithstanding it came to beare fruit of the bignes of a goose egge, one extraordinarie temperate yeere, as I did see in the garden of a worshipfull merchant, Master Harvie in Lime Streete." Concerning the Lote or Nettle Tree, he notes as follows: "There is likewise a tree thereof in the garden under London Wall, sometime belonging to M. Gray, an Apothecary of London;

and another great tree in a garden neere Coleman Streete, in London, being the garden of the Queene's Apothecary."

We catch a glimpse of a village near London, and of its connection with the London market in Gerard's section on Turneps: "The small turnep groweth by a village neere London (called Hackney) . . . and brought to the crosse in Cheapside by the women of that village to be sold." The orchards which supplied the city with fruit are suggested to the mind's eye in this amusing passage of Gerard's, on the "Peare-tree": . . . "in the ground of an excellent graffer and painfull planter, Master Henry Banbury, of Touthill streete, neere unto Westminster; and likewise in the ground of a diligent and most affectionate lover of plants, Master Warnar, neere Horsey Downe, by London, and in divers other grounds about London (but beware the Bag and Bottle) seeke elsewhere for good fruit faithfully delivered."

The gardens of the Inns of Court must have been delightful resorts, and we know that the students at law were among the most enthusiastic play-goers of the period. There can be little doubt these gardens were well known to Shakespeare. When he went to visit Lord Southampton in Holborn, there were

three of these gardens in the neighbourhood, to which these friends—the poet and his patron—could adjourn for a stroll among the flowers, or where they could sit in poetical converse under the shade of trees. Leaving aside the Temple Gardens, which we have already touched upon (*ante*, p. 46), let us take a look at the gardens of Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn.

In his *History of Gray's Inn*, Mr Douthwaite has printed, from the records of the Society, an inventory of the trees existing in the gardens in the year 1583. The positions of the trees are described, some in the Green Court, others in Pannyerman's Close, others in the Gray's Inn Walk, and yet others in different parts of the Inn. There were ninety-one elms, three walnut trees, and one young ash near the seat. Francis Bacon was a member of the Inn, and resided here while composing his Essays, which were published in 1597. Perhaps it was a consequence of his Essay, "Of Gardens," that the Benchers sought his advice and assistance in the improvement of the gardens of the Inn; or it may have been that while engaged in this work for the society he made those notes which finally took shape in his delightful Essay. Drawing upon the records of the Inn, Mr Douthwaite gives an order for the payment of a

sum of money to Mr Bacon in 1597 for planting trees in the walks; and in the following year a much larger sum was paid him for young elm trees and for a new rail and quickset hedge to the upper long walk. In the year 1600, payment of another large sum was ordered to be made to Mr Bacon for "garnishing" the walks. How this garnishing was carried out may be inferred with every degree of probability from Bacon's Essay.

He describes what flowers should be set in the Garden to give "pleasure when you walk or tread." The opening words of this passage recall the strophe to music in Twelfth Night:

> That strain again! it had a dying fall:
> O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound,
> That breathes upon a bank of violets,
> Stealing and giving odour!

"And because the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes, like the warbling of music) than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight than to know what be the flowers and plants that do best perfume the air. Roses, damask and red, are fast flowers of their smells; so that you may walk by a whole row of them, and find nothing of their sweetness, yea, though it be in

a morning's dew. Bays likewise yield no smell as they grow, rosemary little, nor sweet marjoram. That which above all others yields the sweetest smell in the air is the violet, especially the white double violet, which comes twice a year, about the middle of April and about Bartholomew-tide. Next to that is the musk-rose; then the strawberry leaves dying, with a most excellent cordial smell. Then the flower of the vines; it is a little dust like the dust of the bent, which grows upon the cluster in the first coming forth. Then sweetbriar; then wall-flowers, which are very delightful to be set under a parlour or lower chamber window. Then pinks and gilliflowers, especially the matted pink and clove gilliflowers. Then the flowers of the lime-tree. Then the honeysuckles, so they are somewhat afar off. Of bean-flowers I speak not, because they are field-flowers; but those which perfume the air most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being trodden upon and crushed, are three—that is, burnet, wild thyme, and water-mints. Therefore, you are to set whole alleys of them, to have the pleasure when you walk or tread."

It will be remembered that, elsewhere in this Essay, Bacon concludes the description of his ideal

garden of all seasons with the words: "These particulars are for the climate of London."

Happily for the devout, a considerable remnant of these gardens remains in existence at the present day. Here are to be seen the famous rooks—perhaps descendants of progenitors who looked down upon Bacon as he paced the walks beneath the elms—clinging pathetically to traditions of ancient arboreal splendour, sustained by the cates thrown to them by sympathetic hands from the windows around. On a fine June day, when the leafage is thick, there is a hint of summer scents in the air, and the devotee of the past may readily dream of the place as it was when Francis Bacon and William Cecil were denizens of the Inn; when Raleigh paid his farewell visit to Bacon before making his last voyage, and the friends walked together in deep converse beneath the elms. On the north and the west were fields and the open country; on the east was Gray's Inn Lane, "furnished with fair buildings and many tenements on both sides, leading to the fields towards Highgate and Hampstead," says Stow; but the maps of the period show that the houses did not extend far north—not half the extent of the present lane. To the south of the Inn lay Holborn. The bars, which marked the out-

side limits of the city jurisdiction, were situated between Leather Lane and Gray's Inn Lane, and on the north side of the road, Stow tells us, were many fair houses and inns, which stretched westward almost to St Giles-in-the-Fields. On the opposite or south side of the way was Barnard's Inn, with its garden; Staple Inn, with its garden; then the old Temple, in ruins, part of it having been pulled down in 1595; then Southampton House, immediately opposite Gray's Inn, which, with its gardens, filled the space between the old Temple and Chancery Lane. Beyond Chancery Lane a line of houses and gardens stretched to St Giles-in-the-Fields. On the west of Chancery Lane was Lincoln's Inn, the wall of the Inn extending from a point near the top of the lane (the present passage into Stone Buildings) to the gateway built by Sir Thomas Lovel in 1518, which, in spite of threatened destruction, still exists, one of the chief memorials of London. Opposite this gateway was a building called the Coursiters' Office—"built with divers fair lodgings for gentlemen, all of brick and timber, by Sir Nicholas Bacon, late lord keeper of the Great Seal," says Stow. Now the wall of Southampton House ran from the top of Chancery Lane, opposite the wall of

Lincoln's Inn, to a point near this Coursiters' Office, and must therefore have enclosed a garden of considerable size. Between the Coursiters' Office and the Rolls Chapel (recently demolished) were "divers fair houses and large gardens." Shakespeare must have been very familiar with this part of the suburbs, round about the residence of his friend and patron, and its chief characteristic was a minimum of building with a maximum of gardens.

The gardens of Lincoln's Inn were famous for their produce of fruit and flowers long before they appertained to an Inn of Court. The first cultivators were the Friars Preachers or Black Friars, who afterwards settled in the district which yet bears their name. When they left, the house was granted to Henry Lacy, Earl of Lincoln. An account rendered by the Earl's Bailiff * shows that apples, pears, large nuts and cherries were produced in sufficient quantities, over and above the Earl's requirements, to yield a large profit. We find that vegetables of all kinds were cultivated—beans, onions, garlic, leeks, etc. Under the Bailiff was the Head Gardener, who enjoyed a salary and a livery, and various assistants.

* Printed by T. H. Turner in the *Archæological Journal*, 1848.

The present Stone Buildings covers the site of the house and part of the gardens. The remainder of the garden still exists between Stone Buildings and Lincoln's Inn Fields; the wicket gate immediately north of the Hall and Library is the original way from the gardens into the Fields.

To the south of the gardens, and partly also south of the Fields, was a large open space called Fickett's Field, afterwards Little Lincoln's Inn Fields. New Square is built on a part of the site, and the enclosed garden is the sole remnant of the original field or open space. The walks of Lincoln's Inn, like those of Gray's Inn, were shaded with elms, and became a fashionable resort. Ben Jonson, in *The Devil is an Ass*, speaks of

> "The walks of Lincoln's Inn
> Under the elms."

Surely we may conclude that Lord Southampton and Shakespeare, many a time and oft, enjoyed each other's company and engaged in poetical converse in these walks of the Inns of Court. Here may the poet have read to his lordship a fresh sheaf of *Sonnets*, to an accompaniment by feathered songsters aloft in the trees, while bees hummed busily in the flowers around them, and butterflies — undeci-

mated yet by the lepidopterist and collector—darted hither and thither, their varied hues brilliant in the sunshine.

To give all the references and allusions made by Shakespeare to plants and flowers, described by Gerard as growing in London gardens, would tend to the conviction that we are indebted for Shakespeare's observation of nature, as much to London as to Stratford-on-Avon. Space cannot, unfortunately, be afforded for such an exhaustive treatment of this interesting topic. Indeed, an exhaustive treatment is, by the nature of the case, impossible; for on the one hand, we do not know whether Gerard exhausted the flora of London in his *Herball*, and on the other, Shakespeare only drew upon the stores of his memory in the act of composition, and the plants, herbs, and flowers which we meet with in his pages afford little more than an indication of his loving study of nature. With these limitations, it will be of interest to note, however briefly, some of the flora which may have greeted his eyes in London gardens, where they were studied by John Gerard, his contemporary.

Perdita. Bold Oxlips, and
The Crown Imperial.

—*Winter's Tale*, IV. iv.

Gerard says of the Crown Imperial, that it is "made denizens in our London gardens, whereof I have great plentie."

Iris. And thy Broom groves
Whose shadow the dismissed bachelor loves,
Being lass-lorn. —*Tempest*, IV. i.

We are told by Gerard of a variety of this plant which grew in a Broom field at the foot of Shooter's Hill, next to London, and upon Hampstead Heath. He also mentions the Spanish Broom as growing in "our London gardens."

Ceres. Who with thy Saffron wings upon my flowers,
Diffusest honeydrops, refreshing showers.
—*Tempest*, IV. i.

"Our London gardens are possessed with the most part of them," says Gerard, in reference to varieties of the Meadow Saffron; and of the wild Saffron, he says: "all these wilde Saffrons we have growing in our London gardens."

Polyxenes. Then make your garden rich in Gillyvors,
And do not call them bastards.
—*Winter's Tale*, IV. iv.

Of Gillyflowers, Gerard says: "our London gardens have taken possession of them all, many yeares past."

Perdita. . . . Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty.
—*Winter's Tale*, IV. iv.

As growing in London gardens, Gerard notes the common yellow Daffodilly, the Narcissus and Primrose Peerless—"we have them all and everie of them in our London gardens, in great abundance"—the King's Speare, or "small yellow Asphodill"; the "white Asphodill," or Daffodil; and the double white Daffodil of Constantinople.

Iris. Thy banks with Pioned and Lilied brims.
—*Tempest*, IV. i.

Perdita. . . . Lilies of all kinds,
The Flower-de-Luce being one.
—*Winter's Tale*, IV. iv.

"All sorts of Peinonies do grow in our London gardens," says Gerard, and of the lily and the Flower-de-luce, he gives several varieties. The Persian Lily, he says, "is a denizen in some few of our London gardens." Of some kinds of Flower-de-luce he states that they "grow wild in Dalmatia, Goritia and Piedmont; notwithstanding our London gardens are very well stored with every one of them." He describes the Turkey Flower-de-luce,

imported from Constantinople, which was naturalised in his garden. Other varieties had been brought to London from the neighbourhood of Bath and Wells; and of yet other kinds, he says that they grow wild in Spain and Italy, "whence we have had plants for our London gardens, whereof they do greatly abound."

Falstaff. All the other gifts appertinent to man, as the malice of this age shapes them, are not worth a gooseberry.—*Henry IV.*, Pt. 2, I. ii.

Here the fruit is used as a symbol of the cheapness that comes of plenty, and Gerard tells us that gooseberries grew in London gardens in great abundance.

Song. When roasted Crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl.
—*Love's Labour's Lost*, V. ii.

References to apples occur frequently in Shakespeare, and Gerard describes many varieties. Of one kind, the "Wilding and Crab-tree," he says, "we have in our London gardens a dwarffe kind of sweet apple, called Chamsmalu, the dwarffe Apple Tree or Paradise Apple, which beareth apples very timely without grafting."

Helena. So we grew together,
Like to a double Cherry, seeming parted.
—*Midsummer Night's Dream*, III. ii.

Of varieties of the cherry, Gerard says: "these and many more sorts we have in our London gardens." How beautiful must the city have been in the early summer, with the succession of cherry, pear, and apple blossom! There are outlying suburbs of London at the present day, where the houses have been built on old market gardens, which enable us to picture this aspect of Shakespeare's London.

Petruchio. I'll say she looks as clear
As morning Roses newly wash'd with dew.
—*Taming of the Shrew*, II. i.

Of all flowers surely it was the rose that Shakespeare loved best. It might be said that his works are sprinkled with allusions to it—his fancy is ever playing with this lovely flower, and many an image did he derive from it, many a simile and metaphor clustered around it in his teeming thought. "All these sorts of roses," says Gerard, at the end of an enumeration, "we have in our London gardens, except that rose without prickles." Of musk roses he mentions several kinds in London gardens,

particularising the blush rose, and the Cinemora rose, and concluding generally of all kinds, "these are planted in our London gardens and elsewhere." Sweet-brier and wild roses, too, grew in London gardens, and a variety called the Pimpernell rose he describes as growing "in a pasture as you go from a village hard by London called Knightsbridge, unto Fulham, a village thereby." All varieties of wild rose grew in London gardens except the Brier-bush, "which we thinke unworthie the place."

"Pennie royal or Pudding Grasse" abounded on Mile End Common, "whence poore women bring plentie to sell in London markets." Gerard frequently mentions "the London pastures," "the pastures about London," where he found, *inter alia*, white cow wheat, Rest Harrow, or "petie whinne," with white flowers, Seseli or Hart-woort, Burnet Saxifrage, Germander, Buck wheat. "There is a wilde weeping Pinke, which groweth in our pastures neere about London . . . but especially in the great field next to Deptford by the path side as you go from Redriffe to Greenwich." The Buckhorn Plaintain or Hartshorn grew in Tothill field, Westminster, and on Black Heath. The Goat's Beard, or Go-to-bed-at-noon (Joseph's Flower, Star of

Jerusalem) grew "plentifully in most of the fields about London, as at Islington, the meadows by Redriffe, Deptford, and in the meadows near unto Putney."

Gerard tells us that a learned merchant of London, master James Cole, found Ribwoort, "in a fielde neere London by a village called Hoggesdon" (*i.e.* Hoxton), and he himself found Horse-radish at this village, "in the field next unto a farme house leading to Kingsland." It was in the fields of Hoxton that Ben Jonson mortally wounded a player named Gabriel Spenser in a duel. Hoxton was not far from the playhouses, the Theatre and the Curtain, and we can scarcely doubt that Shakespeare knew this village and the farm-house mentioned by Gerard.

If Shakespeare retained his early fondness for the horse, he probably enjoyed many a ride in the country around London. Let us therefore follow the botanist somewhat farther afield, and as we note our flowers and simples, we may remember the possibility that Shakespeare may have passed Gerard while thus employed; our fancy may catch the sound of his horse's hoofs in a canter over the sward, or behold him riding at a foot pace along the country

road, rapt in meditation and the silent observation of nature.

Gerard tells us that he found the "great wild Burnet" growing "upon the side of a cawsey which crosseth the one halfe of a fielde whereof the one part is earable grounde and the other part medowe, lying betweene Paddington and Lysson Greene, neare unto London upon the highway." The wild Mallow, he tells us again, grew by "the ditch sides, on the left hand of the place of execution called Tyborne"; and he found the Earth Nut in "the next fielde unto the Conduit Heads by Maribone, neere the way that leadeth to Paddington." He also found wild Mallow "among the bushes and hedges as you go from London to a bathing place called the Old Ford; and in the bushes as you go to Hackney, a village by London, in the closes next the towne."

Antonio. He'ld sow't with Nettle seed.
Sebastian. Or Docks, or Mallows. —*Tempest*, II. i.

The most delightful of Shakespeare's walks and rides lay in the north of London. Up Gray's Inn Lane, past the village of Kentish Town (where Gerard found "Sneese-woort") to Highgate and Hampstead, or through Islington to Highbury and other villages

now included in the metropolis. The greater part of this northern country consisted of uncleared forest, called woods by Gerard—Hampstead wood, Highgate wood, the wood near Islington, the wood near Hornsey. The hunter's horn and the bay of hounds among these wooded hills proclaimed "the hunt is up" many a time; the noble hunted, the lawyer hunted, even the citizen hunted: then why not the poet from Stratford-on-Avon? Mr Douthwaite quotes a passage from John Smith's *Lives of the Berkeleys*, to the effect that Henry, Lord Berkeley, in the middle of Queen Mary's reign, was living with his mother at Kentish Town and "Shoo" Lane in London, "and daily hunting in Gray's Inne fields and in all those parts towards Islington and Heygate, with his hounds, whereof hee hath many and those excellent good," and that he had "the company of many gentlemen of the Innes of Court, and others of lower condition that daily accompanied him."

The opportunities afforded by the country around London were not neglected, and among the sports and pastimes of Shakespeare's London, that of hawking and hunting was not followed with least enthusiasm. In Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*,

the foolish Stephen is anxious to be in the mode in this respect (Act I. sc. i.):

Knowell. Why, I hope you will not a hawking now, will you?

Stephen. No, wusse, but I'll practise against next year, uncle. I have bought me a hawk and a hood and bells and all; I lack nothing but a book to keep it by . . . why you know an' a man have not skill in the hawking and hunting languages now-a-days, I'll not give a rush for him. They are more studied than the Greek or the Latin. He is for no gallant's company without 'em. . . . Because I dwell at Hogsden, shall I keep company with none but the archers of Finsbury, or the citizens that come a' ducking to Islington ponds?

From an early period the Lord Mayor and Corporation had enjoyed the privilege of hunting in the forest near London. The king's falcons had been kept at the Mews, Charing Cross, and the king's falconer was an office of considerable importance. But in Shakespeare's time the Mews had been turned into stables, where the sovereign's horses were kept. What had been the sport of princes and nobles had become, in the prosperous and comparatively democratic days of Elizabeth, the amusement of the middle classes, in whose favour the hunting grounds about London became relinquished. The allusions to the sport in Shakespeare's plays were probably as well

understood by the groundlings and the occupants of the galleries as by the aristocrats in the lords' rooms of the playhouse. Some of these allusions occur in the earlier plays. For instance, in 1 Henry VI., in the scene in the Temple garden, Somerset appeals to Warwick to decide between the conflicting claims, and Warwick replies, by a figure which touches upon more than one characteristic of the time, hawking among them: "Between two hawks, which flies the higher pitch." And in 2 Henry VI., II. i.:

Queen. Believe me, lords, for flying at the brook,
I saw not better sport these seven years' day:
Yet, by your leave, the wind was very high;
And, ten to one, old Joan had not gone out.
King. But what a point, my lord, your falcon made,
And what a pitch she flew above the rest!

Among the later plays we have the famous image in Othello (III. iii.):

If I do prove her haggard,
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
I'ld whistle her off and let her down the wind
To prey at fortune.

The falcon was generally carried perched on the wrist, attached by strings which were called "jesses."

While Gerard botanised on the northern wooded heights of London, it is likely that the halloos of

falconers would sometimes break upon the stillness of the country, and Shakespeare, aglow with the excitement of the chase, may have appeared to the vision of Gerard, and likely enough they may have been acquainted and exchanged greetings. But such an occurrence would have been a mere passing incident to the botanist, not to be catalogued among his flowers and simples. He found the "Aller tree" in great plenty in a wood a mile from Islington, "on the way from thence to a small village called Harnsey"; he also found it "in the woods at Hampstead, and in most woods in the parts about London." He found "Treacle Mustard" by the path that led from Harnsey to Waltham Cross; and he tells us that the "Great Figgewoort," or "Kernell-woort," grew especially in greatest abundance "in a wood as you go from London to Harnsey." In a field by Islington "where there is a bouling place under a fewe old shrubby okes," sweet Cullions grew, also "upon a common heath, by a village neere London called Stepney." The Fleabane Mullet ("Ladies' gloves") grew in Islington, "in the streete as ye go from the ende of the towne next London unto the church." Wild garlic was found in great plenty "in the field called the Mantels, on

the back-side of Islington." Adjoining Islington there was a wood, where Gerard found Same woort and the Service tree. Sneese-woort grew in the three great fields adjoining Kentish town.

In Highgate, Gerard found "Mullein," and a field adjoining Highgate, on the right side of the middle of the village, was covered with Earth nut. Sleeping Nightshade he found "without the gate of Highgate, neere unto a pound or pinfold on the left hand"; and in the fields adjoining this pound he found "Fox stones." In the wood by Highgate called Finchley Wood he found Whortes or Whortleberries; and in "Highgate Park, near London," the Cotton Grass grew.

> Their sweetest shade, a grove of Cypress trees.
> —2 *Henry VI.*, III. ii.

The cypress grew in divers places in England, says Gerard, as at Sion, a place near London (*i.e.*, between Brentford and Isleworth), "sometime a house of nunnes"; it grew also at Greenwich, and at Hampstead, "in the garden of Master Waide, one of the Clerkes of her Majesty's Privy Counsell." "Betonie" with white flowers is seldom seen, Gerard tells us, but he found it in a wood near this house, and brought away some plants for his garden. He

found Crossewort in Hampstead Churchyard, and Archangel, or Dead Nettle with the yellow flower, "under the hedge on the left hand as you go from the village of Hampsteede neere London to the church, and in the wood thereby." Writing of Buckhorn Plantaines, Gerard says it "groweth upon a barren ditch banke neere unto a gate leading into a pasture on the right hand of the way as you go from London to a village called Hampsteed."

It is this careful description of the localities where he found his specimens that renders Gerard's *Herball* so valuable for topographical purposes. The preceding notes reveal to us the characteristics of the country around the city in a singularly vivid way. Before we leave this northern country we must take some account of what Gerard incidentally tells us about Hampstead Heath and Hampstead Wood. Of the Heath he lets us understand that he found it one of the richest hunting-grounds for botanical purposes: "Cotton grasse groweth upon bogs and such like moorish places, as it is to be seen upon a bog at the further end of Hampstead Heath in a valley upon the right hand neere to a small cottage, as ye go from London to Henden" In the midst of this bog he also

found growing the Water Ferne or Osmund the Water-man. Speaking of the Heath generally, near the beginning of his *Herball*, Gerard says, "in which place doth growe likewise many other rare simples, as you shall understand hereafter in this treatise." Of the Fox stone (Orchis) he says, "that kinde which resembleth the white Butter-flie groweth upon the declining of the hill at the north end of Hampsteed Heath."

> Yea, and furr'd Moss besides, when flowers are none.
> —*Cymbeline*, IV. ii.

Writing of Ground Moss and a variety called "Little Golde Locks," Gerard says he found it "in great abundance in a shadowie ditch upon the left hand neere unto a gate that leadeth from Hampsteed heath toward Highgate." He notes also another kind of moss which he had not found elsewhere than upon Hampstead Heath, "neere unto a little cottage, growing close upon the ground, among bushes and brakes."

> *Benedick.* I offered him my company to a willow tree.
> —*Much Ado*, II. i.

Gerard says he found the dwarf willows growing at the further end of the Heath. Lily of the valley,

or May Lillie; Starrewoort, Kneebolme or Butcher's Broome, Spleenewoort; these are all mentioned as growing abundantly on the Heath.

Gonzalo. Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground, long Heath, brown Furze, anything.—*Tempest*, I. i.

Gerard describes the Furzes, Gorsse, whinne or Prickley Broome as growing upon Hampstead Heath; and of Heath or Heather all the sorts grew there, "except that with the white flower, and that which beareth berries."

The wild Cow-wheat Gerard found in all parts of Hampstead Heath, "among the Juniper bushes and Bilberrie bushes." The kidney vetch grew on the Heath, "right against the Beacon, upon the right hand as you go from London, neere unto a gravell pit." The Hedge Hyssope grew in Gerard's garden, but the broad-leaved kind he found upon the bog or marrish ground at the further end of Hampstead Heath: "and upon the same Heath towards London, neere unto the head of the springs that were digged for water to be conveied to London, 1590, attempted by that carefull citizen, Sir John Hart, Knight, Lord Maior of the Citie of London; at which time myselfe was in his Lordships company, and viewing for my

pleasure the same goodly springs, I found the said plant."

The interesting topographical details by which Gerard thus brings before us Hampstead Heath, as it was in Shakespeare's time, are not repeated in the case of Hampstead Woods. Of Cotton weede he says it "groweth in the darke woodes of Hampsteede and the woods neere unto Detforde by London." Of Golden Rod he notes as follows: "They both grow plentifully in Hampsteed wood, neere unto the gate that leadeth out of the wood unto a village called Kentish Town. . . . I have known the drie herbe which came from beyond the seas solde in Bucklers burie in London for half a crowne an ounce. But since it was found in Hampsteed Wood . . . no man will give halfe a crowne for an hundredweight of it."

Falstaff. . . . .Come, I cannot cog, and say thou art this and that, like a many of these lisping hawthorn-buds, that come like women in men's apparel, and smell like Bucklesbury in simple time. . . .

—*Merry Wives*, III. iii.

"This whole street called Bucklesbury," says Stow, "on both sides throughout is possessed of grocers and apothecaries towards the west end thereof." Gerard says again, that "Tutsan groweth in wooddes

and by hedges, especially in Hampsteed wood, where the Golden Rod doth growe." He gives the following as growing in Hampstead Wood — Samewoort, Pease Earth-nut, White Mountain Crowfoote, Divels Bit, Brookelyme or Water Pimpernell, Twayblade or Helbe Bisoile, Satyrion Royall, Wilde Mercurie.

If the suburbs formed but an inconsiderable barrier between the city and the open country on the Middlesex side of the river, this was even more the case on the Surrey side. From a point opposite Blackfriars there was, in the words of Stow, "a continual building of tenements half a mile in length to the bridge." A glance at the maps of the time show us that this was a single row of houses, fronting the river along Bankside. Beyond lay St George's Fields and the open country. Looking at Visscher's map the reader will see at once that the southward view from any high point in the city across the river was the scenery of Surrey. Eastward of this was Bridge Ward Without, which stretched south to St George's Church and beyond it through Blackman Street towards Newington, the liberties of the borough extending nearly to Newington Parish Church, "distant one mile from London Bridge,"

says Stow. On the east side of the Bridge was St Olave's Street, leading to Battle Bridge, to Horselydown, and towards Rotherhithe, "also some good half mile in length from London Bridge." Stow reckoned that the continual building along the bank west and east of the Bridge at "more than a large mile in length." South of Horselydown was Bermondsey, which connected itself with Southwark by Long Lane. Out of Long Lane, Kentish Street, the present Old Kent Road, led towards Canterbury—the road of Chaucer's pilgrims after they had left the Tabard Inn.

In Kentish Street was the Church of St Thomas à Waterings, so called from a spring or brook dedicated to St Thomas à Becket. Here was a place of execution for the county of Surrey, which is mentioned by Gerard several times. Starting from his house in Holborn, Gerard walked down to Blackfriars, and there took the ferry over to Paris garden stairs. He tells that the Hairy Hedgehog Grasses grew in watery ditches, "as you may see in going from Paris Garden Bridge to St George's Fields, and such like places." The bridge alluded to was over a stream which surrounded Paris Garden Manor. Within the Manor was the Swan Theatre,

built by Francis Langley, one of the city officials, in 1596: the theatre is figured by Visscher. On the left—*i.e.*, eastward—was the Liberty of the Clink, wherein were the Bear Garden, the Rose Theatre, and the famous Globe. Opposite Paris Garden Stairs was a road running south, dividing Paris Garden from the Clink, and leading across St George's Fields. That was the road Gerard took when he went botanising in these marshy lands on the Surrey side of the river. Sometimes, however, when he left the ferry, he turned off to the right, to Lambeth Marsh. There was a way along the river front, and here he came upon the "Narrowe leafed" Rocket. "I found it," he says, "as ye go from Lambithe Bridge to the village of Lambithe, under a small bridge that you must pass over hard by the Thames side." He found the Clownes Woundwoort or Alheale growing "in the meadows by Lambeth neere London," and the spiked willow-herb or loose-strife "under the Bishop's house-wall at Lambeth" near the river.

But let us follow Gerard up Paris Garden Lane to St George's Fields. Of the Water Yarrow and Water Gilloflower, he says, "I have not founde such plentie of it in any one place as in the water ditches adjoin-

ing to Saint George his fielde neere London." The Froggebit he found swimming or floating "in all the ditches about Saint George his fielde and in the ditches by the Thames side neere to Lambeth marsh, where any that is disposed may see it." There was a windmill on St George's Fields.

Shallow. O, Sir John, do you remember since we lay all night in the windmill in St George's Field?—2 *Henry IV.*, III. ii.

Leaving St George's Fields, Gerard crossed the Borough High Street and walked up Long Lane to Bermondsey. Here was the mansion of the Earl of Sussex, in the neighbourhood of which Gerard found some specimens for his *Herball.* He had seen the Muske Melon, very many and ripe, at the Queen's house of St James, "and in other places neere unto the Right Honorable the Lord of Sussex House of Bermondsey, by London, where from yeere to yeere there is verie great plenty, especially if the weather be anything temperate." Of the Bitter Sweet or Wood Nightshade he found a variety with white flowers, "in a ditch side against the garden wall" of this house, "as you go from the court which is full of trees unto a farm house neere thereunto." In a ditch near the house he found Water Crowfoot.

Across the fields, Gerard came to Newington, and passed Henslowe's theatre there. Some of Shakespeare's earliest plays were produced at this house. This was before the Globe was set up in the Clink liberty and before the Swan was built in Paris Garden. The two theatres on this side the river at that time — the Newington theatre beyond the southern limit of the city boundaries, and the Rose in the Clink liberty — were both in the hands of Philip Henslowe. When there was danger of infection from the Plague, Henslowe was sometimes allowed to open the theatre at Newington, when the Rose was ordered to be closed. This distinction was due to the greater distance from London, and the large open space of St George's Field which lay between the Newington theatre and the metropolis.

Sometimes after leaving St George's Fields Gerard turned off Long Lane into Kentish Street and walked to St Thomas à Waterings. He tells that the Burre Reede or Great Water Burre, and the Arrow Head or Water Archer, which grew in the ditches about St George his fields, he found also "in the ditch right against the place of execution at the end of Southwarke neere London, called Saint Thomas Waterings." The Bastard Rubarbe grew along the ditch sides leading

from Kentish Street to St Thomas à Waterings; and the White Saxifrage grew "especially in a fielde on the left hand of the high way, as you go from St Thomas Waterings unto Dedford." Lastly, there was a variety of Willow Herb or Loose-strife which grew "hard by the Thames as ye go from a place called the Devils Neckerchefe to Redreffe, neere unto a stile that standeth in your way upon the Thames banke, among the plankes that do hold up the same banke. It groweth also in a ditch not far from the place of execution, called St Thomas Waterings."

We have not exhausted the flora of Shakespeare's London; but by following Gerard on his botanical rambles in and about London we have been able to supplement what Stow, in his *Survey*, incidentally tells us concerning out-door London in Shakespeare's time. The matter in its general bearing upon Shakespeare and his work is perhaps sufficiently obvious; but there are some considerations which may be specially dwelt upon.

The habit of loving observation of nature and her ways was not checked by Shakespeare's removal from Stratford to London. It happened that, with

the quickening of his intellectual life in the Metropolis, his opportunities of nature-study were hardly less than they would have been had he abode in Warwickshire; and there can be no doubt that his coming to London developed his general powers of observation, as his calling constantly exercised his gift of expression. A grasp of these conditions alters the customary point of view with regard to Shakespeare. Hitherto the poet has been placed, in the imagination of his devotees, in the meads and lanes of Warwickshire, along the banks of the winding Avon; and no doubt, here was in a true sense his home, and therefore, fitly enough, it has become his shrine, the Mecca of the English race. But it is evident, not only that London bore its share in the development of the genius of Shakespeare, but also that this share included a large part of his development as the prophet and poet of Nature.

Another important point lies in the circumstance that the life of the Elizabethan Londoner was largely an outdoor one, and that the nature-pictures and allusions so richly scattered up and down the plays struck familiarly upon chords of memory and association in the minds of the audience in an Elizabethan playhouse. The conventional notices upon the stage

of woodland or country scenes would readily convey the idea of such scenes familiar in the neighbourhood of London. A wood near Athens, for instance, would be understood by reference to a wood near London. The forest of Arden—whither the characters in the play proceed on foot—would suggest the Hampstead woods, four miles from the city. Here, as in the historical plays, much of the scenery lay outside the playhouse: the notices of scene on the stage had reference to things familiar.

These considerations not only help to explain the absence of scenery from the Elizabethan stage; they also suggest a *raison d'être* for scenery when the plays are produced in modern times. The stage-pictures of to-day present visually what was called into the consciousness of an Elizabethan audience by the conventional notice put up in the theatre.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMEDIES

In studying the drama in the sixteenth century, we are hampered by our pre-conceptions. We view it as a finished product, not as a newly-devised instrument perfected of many parts. Nor is it easy to place ourselves at the point of view of the Elizabethan and realise the appeal and the effect of a Shakespeare play at the time of its original production. This can only be achieved by patient critical study, and although the materials have accumulated, and have been turned over and over again, the attempts at actual interpretation have been few.

In the case of so vast a subject, all depends upon whether we lay hold of the matter by the right handle. It is useless to take the printed play and pore upon it, and weave from the text imaginary theories to answer our questionings. The right handle is at the other end, in the conditions precedent to the evolution of the perfect work of art which the stage-play became

in the hands of Shakespeare, and in the circumstances of the time when the plays were first given to the world.

In the days of the miracle-play, secular interest tended to encroach upon the Bible-story, and any by-play and allusion glancing at the life of the people was keenly relished. The actors, thus encouraged, exerted their histrionic powers till the seemliness befitting the sacred subject was sometimes abandoned, and this abuse was one of the causes of the suppression of the religious play. Then came the Morality-play, in which various qualities of virtue and of vice were represented by actors with appropriate dialogue. Here there was considerable scope for histrionic skill, and obnoxious persons became represented in the character of the vice for which they were detested, while favourite personages, or those to whom a compliment was intended, were simulated by the actors under the name of the virtue or excellence to which it was desired to do honour.

Another element which largely contributed to the making of the Elizabethan drama was the Revel which lasted during the twelve days, in celebration of Christmas and the advent of another cycle of time with its seasons. Rooted in Pagan or pre-Christian

custom and observance, the Christmas Revel ruled alike in the palaces of the king, the Bishop, and the Baron; literally ruled, because the actual heads or governors alike of these palaces and of the universities abdicated for this period every year in favour of an elected Lord of Misrule. This inversion of position was in itself humorous and provocative of satirical mirth, like the "topsy-turveydom" of Mr W. S. Gilbert. How many a satirical sketch and laughable caricature were made by these Revellers in the incipiency of our drama!

The revival of learning and the approach of the Reformation had a refining influence upon the Revel, and an organised representation, called the Masque, took the place of the more impromptu entertainment which had formerly accompanied the reign of the Lord of Misrule. The idea of the Masque was simply disguise. It was sometimes termed an Invention, or an Antique. There was disguise by dress, and there was disguise by covering the face—whence the mask and half-mask worn by revellers. The "Invention" was usually a presentation of some classical legend, story or incident—hence its alternative name of "Antique"—under which some allegorical meaning or compliment was suggested;

such meaning or intention appearing beneath the "Masque," under the cover of the device.

This travesty of the actual sometimes gave offence. Two instances will suffice to demonstrate the way in which the Masque glanced at personages and events. Hall recorded, in his Chronicle, that in 1525 a "goodly disguising was played at Gray's Inn, which was compiled by John Roo, Serjeant at the Law." This play, says Hall, "was so set forth with rich and costly apparel, and with strange devices of masks and morrishes, that it was highly praised of all men, saving of the Cardinal, which imagined that the play had been devised of him. In a great fury he [Wolsey] sent for the said Master Roo, and took from him his Coif, and sent him to the Fleet, and after he sent for the young gentlemen that played in the play, and them highly rebuked and threatened, and sent one of them, called Thomas Moyle, of Kent, to the Fleet; but, by the means of friends, Master Roo and he were delivered at last." Another instance: in 1547, Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, addressed an appeal to the privy council, to the effect that he intended to have a solemn dirge and Mass for the late king, Henry VIII. (in Saviour's Church presumably), but as the players in South-

wark declare that they will also have "a solemn playe to try who shal have most resorte, they in game, or I in earnest," he begs the interference of the protector (Somerset) "to prevent this mockery."

The Masque not only preceded, but co-existed with, the drama, and its influence upon Shakespeare has been overlooked. Moreover, the mental atmosphere of the Elizabethan age was suffused with allegorical thought and imagery. The works of its chief apostle, Edmund Spenser, and, indeed, the poet himself, were well known to Shakespeare. It may be said that a fantastical indirectness distinguished the poetry of that age; and Shakespeare himself was primarily a poet.

For the sake of brevity and convenience, let this habit of thought and expression be termed the Elizabethan convention. It stands related to the convention of the Masque, by which current events, topics, and personages were glanced at under the cover of a fantastical device or invention of a dramatic character; and the influence of the Masque may be traced in the predecessors of Shakespeare. But the advent of a poet among the dramatists brought the Elizabethan convention wholly and unmistakably upon the stage. Shakespeare was strong where Spenser

was weak, in dramatic power, and the comparison between the two poets is this: that while Spenser allegorised contemporary events and personages, Shakespeare set forth in his plays a masquerade of the life, and manners, and interests of his time. His object and method are clearly enunciated in Hamlet:

"... The purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure."

The fact that Shakespeare took his plots and stories from foreign sources, retaining the foreign names and *locales* of the originals, has proved a more effective disguise to posterity than it was to the Elizabethans. With them the device was taken for granted—it was the mode of the time. It constituted a part of the "play," with the audience, to detect the reality beneath the mask, the actual beneath the fictitious.

The nature of this convention may be demonstrated by tracing the stages through which Shakespeare's great dramatic successor, Benjamin Jonson, emancipated himself from it. In his earliest im-

portant play, *Every Man in his Humour*, produced in 1598, he conformed to the convention. The play was printed in 4to, in 1601, and the title page declares it was printed—"As it hath beene sundry times publickly acted by the Right Honorable the Lord Chamberlaine, his seruants." The scene is Florence, and with two exceptions the characters have Italian names. Now, when the play was printed in the Folio of 1616, the scene was changed to London, and the characters were endowed with English names. Slight modifications were made throughout, to agree with the change of *locale;* but so easily and smoothly is the alteration effected as to suggest that Jonson had London and English characters in mind all the time, and, indeed, that the alteration was but the removal of the Italian mask.

The *dramatis personæ* are printed in the 4to, under the heading "The number and names of the Actors." These are here reproduced in the order in which they occur, the later equivalent characters being placed opposite:

Lorenzo, senior . . .	OLD KNOW'ELL.
Prospero	WELLBRED.
Thorello	KITELY.
Stephano	MR STEPHEN.

Doctor Clement . . .	JUSTICE CLEMENT.
Bobadilla	CAPT. BOBADILL.
Musco	BRAINWORM.
Cob	COB.
Giulliano	DOWNRIGHT.
Lorenzo, junior . . .	ED. KNOW'ELL.
Biancha	MRS BRIDGET.
Hesperida	DAME KITELY.
Peto	ROGER FORMAL.
Matheo	MR MATTHEW.
Pizo	CASH.
Tib	TIB.

The comparison of a short passage in its original shape with its altered form will suffice to illustrate the change.

QUARTO : ACT I. SC. i.

Servant. I pray you, sir, is this Pazzi house?

Lorenzo, sen. Yes, mary, is it, sir.

Serv. I should enquire for a gentleman here, one Signior Lorenzo di Pazzi ; do you know any such, sir, I pray you?

Lor., sen. Yes, sir ; or else I should forget myselfe.

Serv. I crye you mercy, sir, I was requested by a gentleman of Florence (having some occasion to ride this way) to deliver you this letter.

Lor., sen. To me, sir? What doe you meane? I pray you, remember your curtsy. To his deare and most elected friend Signior Lorenzo di Pazzi. What might the gentleman's name be, sir, that sent it? Nay, pray you be couer'd.

Serv. Signior Prospero.

Lor., sen. Signior Prospero? A young gentleman of the family of Strozzi, is he not?

Serv. I, sir, the same. Signor Thorello, the rich Florentine merchant, married his sister.

FOLIO: ACT I. SC. ii.

Serv. I pray, sir, is this master Know'ell's house?

Kno'well. Yes, marry, is it, sir.

Serv. I should enquire for a gentleman here, one master Edward Know'ell; do you know any such, sir, I pray you?

Kno. I should forget myself else, sir.

Serv. Are you the gentleman? cry your mercy, sir: I was required by a gentleman i' the city, as I rode out at this end o' the town, to deliver you this letter, sir.

Kno. To me, sir! What do you mean? pray you remember your court'sie. To his most selected friend master Edward Know'ell. What might the gentleman's name be, sir, that sent it? Nay, pray you be cover'd.

Serv. One master Well-bred, sir.

Kno. Master Well-bred! a young gentleman? is he not?

Serv. The same, sir, master Kitely married his sister; the rich merchant i' the Old Jewry.

The Knowells live at Hoxton. Well-bred dates his letter from the Windmill, a well-known house in the Old Jewry. He begins—"Why, Ned, I beseech thee, hast thou forsworn all thy friends i' the Old Jewry?" and asks Knowell to go over to him quickly,

"this morning." In the quarto, Prospero begins his letter—"Sisha Lorenzo, I muse we cannot see thee at Florence," and urges his friend to go to him at Florence "this day." In Act II. Sc. i. Musco says "Well, the troth is, my master intends to follow his sonne driefoot to Florence this morning," which appears thus in the revised version—"Well, the truth is, my old master intends to follow my young dry-foot over moorfields to London, this morning." There are other instances where the topography holds good. In the next scene young Lorenzo, being in Florence, asks Musco what breath had blown him thither: Musco replies, "Your easterly winde, sir, the same that blew your father hither." In the revision, Brainworm replies—"The breath o' your letter, sir, this morning; the same that blew you to the Windmill, and your father after you." The passage in the quarto continues thus:

Lor., jun. My father?

Musco. Nay, never start, it's true, he has come to towne of purpose to seeke you.

Lor., jun. Sirra Prospero: what shall we do, sirra, my father is come to the city.

Pros. Thy father, where is he?

Musco. At a gentleman's house yonder by Saint Anthonie's, where he but stayes my returne.

Whether this was intended to signify St Anthony's church in Budge Row it is impossible now to say. But compare this with the revised form:

Ed. Knowell. My father?

Brainworm. Nay, never start, 'tis true; he has follow'd you over the fields by the foot, as you would do a hare i' the snow.

Ed. Kno. Sirrah Well-bred, what shall we do, Sirrah? my father is come over after me.

Wel. Thy father, where is he?

Brain. At Justice Clement's house in Coleman Street, where he but stays my return.

The play is much amplified and improved in the revision, but to read the quarto in the light of the later form is to feel convinced that the Italian mask was a transparent device. Among the improvements effected must be numbered Bobadil's famous oath: in the quarto it is "By the life of Pharaoh." The humours of Cob the water-bearer and his wife Tib remain unchanged. Cob dwells "at the sign of the water-tankard, hard by the Greene lattice," and Musco says, as Brainworm said after him—"to meet anon at one Cob's house, a water-bearer's, that dwells by the wall." We have the incident of the arrest by "one of the varlets of the city." Various allusions which remain unchanged prove that they

were understood as referring to London, although the scene was nominally Florence, as, for instance, in young Lorenzo's mocking exhortation to Stephen not to veil his gifts, or "shadow their glorie as a milliners wife doth her wrought Stomacher with a smoakie lawne or black cipresse." The original of Clement was doubtless a well-known London character. In the quarto Cob exclaims to Tib in reference to him, "oh, the doctor! the honestest old Trojan in all Italy"; which was revised thus—"O, the justice! the honestest old brave Trojan in London!"

One more parallel must be given, not so much because it concerns the character of Clement as that it affords a point to which we shall recur presently in connection with Shakespeare's comedies.

QUARTO: III. ii.

Lor., jun. Doctor Clement, what's he? I have heard much speech of him.

Pro. Why, doest thou not know him? he is the Gonfalionero of the state here, an excellent rare civilian and a great scholler, but the only mad merry olde fellow in Europe: I shewed him you the other day.

Lor., jun. Oh, I remember him now; good faith, and he hath a very strange presence me thinkes, it shewes as if he stoode out of his ranke from other men. I have

heard many of his jests in Padua : they say he will commit a man for taking the wall of him.

FOLIO : III. v.

E. Know'ell. Justice Clement ! what's he ?

Wellbred. Why, dost thou not know him ? He is a city-magistrate, a justice here, an excellent good lawyer, and a great scholar ; but the only mad, merry old fellow in Europe. I shewed him you the other day.

E. Kno. Oh, is that he ? I remember him now. Good faith, and he has a very strange presence, methinks ; it shews as if he stood out of the rank from other men : I have heard many of his jests i' th' university. They say he will commit a man for taking the wall of his horse.

Here it is to be noted that the fantastic term, " Gonfalionero of the State," covers a city magistrate, a justice, lawyer and scholar ; and also that Padua = University.

Hardly less remarkable is Jonson's use of the convention in *Every Man out of his Humour*, produced in the following year, 1599, by the Chamberlain's Company, of which Shakespeare was a member. No scene is stated ; all the characters have Italian names, and the play contains plentiful allusions to London—Cripplegate, St. Paul's, Ludgate prison, Fetter Lane, Tower Wharf, the Mitre tavern, the

Counter prison, the Bankside, Westminster, Fulham, the Inns of Court. It is highly probable that many of the bitterly satirical protraits in this play were from contemporary originals, probably still living when the folio was published in 1616, and that the foreign names were retained for the sake of disguise.

Jonson's next play was *Cynthia's Revels*, acted in 1600, by the children of the Queen's Chapel. It is termed "a Comical Satire," and it is dedicated "to the special Fountain of Manners, THE COURT." It is a fantastic image of the fantastic mood which prevailed among the courtiers. The characters are endowed with classical names, and the scene is called "Gargaphie." It is a masque, a revel, in dramatic form. Being, as it was, a satirical reflection of the court, it teems with topical allusions, and it contains references to contemporary events in London. Moreover, it furnishes a key to the author's attitude towards the convention we are discussing. One of the children who speak the Induction says :—

"First, the title of his play is *Cynthia's Revels*, as any man (that hath hope to be saved by his book) can witness; the scene Gargaphie, which I do

vehemently suspect for some fustian country; but let that vanish."

Now "Fustian" signified that which appertained to the stage. Jonson employed the word in his previous play in this sense, when Carlo Buffone interrupts the prologue thus: "Come, come, leave these fustian protestations." The time was coming when Jonson freed himself from the convention and painted boldly from the life of his time without disguise or subterfuge. But that was not yet, and in his succeeding play, the *Poetaster*, acted by the children of the royal chapel in 1601, the scene is obviously a "fustian country," although it is called Rome.

This play is one of the most interesting documents in English dramatic history. Jonson's success with his two "Humour" plays had aroused the envy of his quondam companions, the playwrights and players associated with Henslowe and Alleyn at the Rose and Newington Theatres on the other side of the Thames, or on the other side of Tiber, as it is called in the *Poetaster*. The envy was deepened when *Cynthia's Revels* was performed by the children of the Chapel Royal, and apparently it was so acute as to induce two authors who should have known better

to become guilty of slanderous depreciation and detraction of their successful rival. However, owing to an inhibition of the Chamberlain's company, the Children held possession of the Blackfriars stage, and they performed Jonson's new dramatic satire. Marston and Decker, who had headed the cabal against him, are introduced under the characters of Crispinus and Demetrius; Jonson's learned sock was on throughout the piece, and he gave his immense satirical power full rein. Whatever the provocation may have been, the punishment is certainly very severe. However amusing it is to read at this distance of time, it must have been cruel to the victims, and there is something distasteful in the idea of so savage a satire being set forth by the young choristers of the Chapel.

> "It is excellent to have a giant's strength,
> But tyrannous to use it like a giant."

The method of Jonson's traducers seems to have been to raise prejudice against him in the minds of influential persons by suggesting that they were the objects aimed at in the satires of the "Humour" plays, and of *Cynthia's Revels*. Accordingly, the poet attacks this prejudice before the play begins.

"After the second sounding," says the stage direction, "Envy ariseth in the midst of the stage," and proceeds to deliver the lines, from which the following are an excerpt :

What's here ? th' arraignment ? . . .
. . . these fifteen weeks
(So long as since the plot was but an embrion)
Have I with burning lights mix'd vigilant thoughts
In expectation of this hated play . . .
For I am riss here with a covetous hope
To blast your pleasures and destroy your sports
With wrestings, comments, applications,
Spy-like suggestions, privy whisperings,
And thousand such promoting sleights as these.
Mark how I will begin : the scene is, ha !
Rome ? Rome ? and Rome ? . . .
I am prevented ; all my hopes are crost,
Check'd and abated ; . . .
What should I do ? Rome ? Rome ? O my vext soul
How might I force this to the present state ?
Are there no players here ? no poet-apes . . .
Either of these would help me ; they could wrest,
Pervert and poyson all they hear or see
With senseless glosses and allusions.
. . . to hiss, sing and tear
His work and him ; to forge, and then declaim,
Traduce, corrupt, apply, enforce, suggest. . . .

As the play proceeds Rome becomes more and more obviously a "fustian country." In the second

act the citizen Albius and his wife Chloe are clearly an Elizabethan citizen and City madam. As an instance, take only the following short extract from speeches by Chloe:

I was a gentlewoman born, I; I lost all my friends to be a citizen's wife, because I heard they kept their wives as fine as ladies. . . . Nor you nor your house (she says to her husband) were so much as spoken of before I disbas'd myself from my hood and farthing'al, to these bum-rowls and your whalebone boddice.

Jonson, with characteristic directness and honest lack of modesty, represents himself in the play under the character of Horace! Crispinus (probably Marston) meets him (Act III. Sc. i.) "composing as he goes i' the street"; and a very amusing scene follows, of Crispinus pestering the poet with his chatter, and of the preoccupation of Horace, who vainly tries to cast him off. The poet bethinks him of a device—he is going to visit a sick friend. Crispinus immediately enquires where?

Horace. Where I shall be fearful to draw you out of your way, sir; a great way hence; pray, sir, let's part.

Crispinus. Nay, but where is it? I pr'y thee say.

Horace. On the far side of all Tyber yonder, by Cæsar's gardens.

Cris. O, that's my course directly.

Horace. Yes, sir; marry the plague is in that part of the city; I had almost forgot to tell you, sir.

"On the far side of the Thames yonder, by Paris Garden," was the simple reality under this masquerade of locality.

Space will not admit of a further detailed examination of this interesting use of a recognised stage convention; but it may be added that Jonson introduces a masquerade within the masquerade of his play—his characters assuming the names and sustaining the rôles of various gods and goddesses in the Roman Pantheon. A moderate acquaintance with the history and manners of the period is sufficient to enable the modern reader to follow the allusions, and appreciate the satire in the *Poetaster*, so transparent is the fiction, so obviously is the Rome of the play a conventional device, a "fustian country" beneath which the features of Shakespeare's London plainly appear.

Ben Jonson was not an unconscious child of genius. He was a conscious, if somewhat pedantic, dramatic artist; a disciple of the ancient classical drama, its laws and unities. In these earlier pieces, we behold him playing with the Elizabethan convention; a little later he cast it aside altogether.

In his maturity he produced plays on classical themes, like his *Catiline* and his *Sejanus*, where the scene was verily Rome, and his characters verily Romans; and he produced plays that portrayed the life of his own time, where the scene was no "fustian country," but London plainly and without subterfuge, the characters Englishmen and Londoners of his own time. The intermediate stage in the development of his method is represented in his play *Volpone*, produced in 1605, four years after the *Poetaster*. The scene is laid in Venice, and it appears to have been Jonson's object to give a consistent picture of Venetian life and manners in the actual Venice, not the conventional Venice of stage-land, as in *Every Man in his Humour*. With this object of consistency in view, he introduces his English characters as travellers, whose foibles are shown with admirable art amid their foreign surroundings, while their allusions to affairs and events at home derive piquancy from the effect of strangeness and distance. It was a realistic treatment of the conventional method; the object of the method and its effect improved by more careful art. But admirably as all this is carried out, Jonson makes

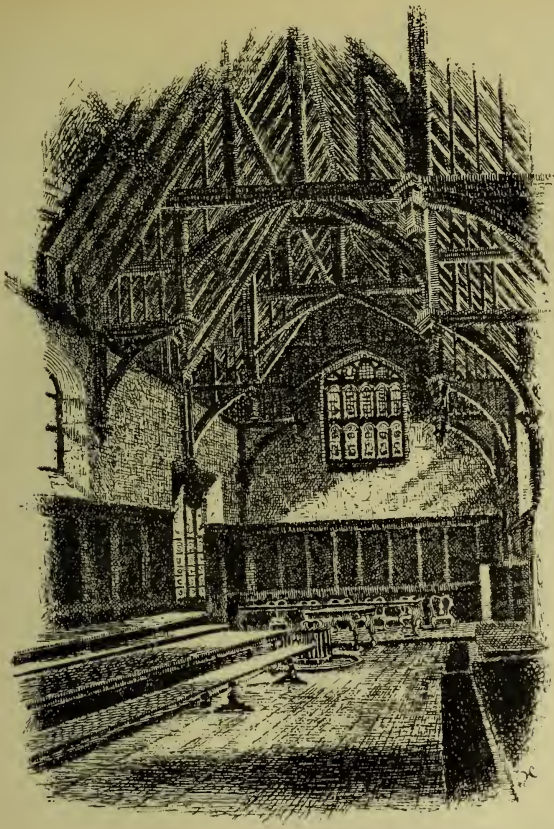
a concession near the end of the play. There is some amusing business, in which the Englishman, Sir Politick Would-be, is frightened by a sham arrest. Peregrine, who devises the joke, declares that warrants are out for his apprehension, and induces him to hide in a tortoise-shaped contrivance, an "ingine," which Sir Politick had ever kept by him in case of such an emergency. The *mercatori* come in and discover their quarry in the tortoise, and thus these Venetian officials comment on the affair :—

Mercator 1. 'Twere a rare motion to be seen in Fleet Street.
Mer. 2. I, i' the Term.
Mer. 1. Or Smithfield in the fair.
Mer. 3. Methinks, 'tis but a melancholy sight.
Per. Farewell, most politick tortoise.
Pol. Where's my lady?
Knows she of this?
Woman. I know not, sir.
Pol. Enquire.
O, I shall be the fable of all feasts,
The freight of the Gazetti, ship boys' tale;
And, which is worst, even talk for ordinaries.

This inquiry into the conventions of the Elizabethan stage could be profitably pursued in greater detail; but with the results obtained so far, it is necessary

now to proceed to consider the circumstances attending the presentation of Shakespeare's comedies and romantic plays in their author's life-time. The selection of the story, from some foreign source, was determined, we may suppose, by its adaptability to current topics of political or social interest; the foreign *locale* of the story supplied the "fustian country" for the play; the foreign characters had their analogues in English personages; and the foreign names, like the foreign *locale*, belonged to a recognised convention. If the play were presented at the royal palace, at the mansion of a great lord, or in the Hall of one of the Inns of Court, the absence of scenery was not felt, for movable scenes were not used even in the public theatres. The play was recited; it belonged to the "drama of rhetoric." But it stood in a nearer relation to the Elizabethan audience than it does to ourselves. The scenes could be realised by reference to scenes familiar in contemporary England, in contemporary London; the immense difference between the life and manners of that time and our own is, in a great measure, supplied by the devices of modern dramatic representation.

One of the earliest, if not actually the first, of



INTERIOR OF GRAY'S INN HALL

Shakespeare's comedies was performed in Gray's Inn Hall in 1594, as part of the Revels of that year. The elected chief of the Gray's Inn Revels bore the title of Prince of Purpoole (the equivalent of the Lord of Misrule), derived from the site of the Inn—the ancient Manor of Portpoole, or Purpoole. There is happily in existence a contemporary description of the Revels in 1594, which included the performance of the Comedy of Errors. The elected Prince of this year was Henry Helmes, a gentleman of Norfolk, and the pamphlet describing the proceedings of his reign bears the following title: *Gesta Grayorum*, or the History of the High and Mighty Prince Henry, Prince of Purpoole, Arch-Duke of Stapulia and Bernarda, Duke of High and Nether Holborn, Marquis of St Giles and Tottenham, Count Palatine of Bloomsbury and Clerkenwell, Great Lord of the Cantons of Islington, Kentish Town, Paddington, and Knightsbridge, Knight of the most Heroical Order of the Helmet, and Sovereign of the same; who reigned and died, A.D. 1594.*

This is in the true "stalking vein," to use Ben Jonson's phrase, and the fantastic titles here used are

* The pamphlet is noticed at length in *Gray's Inn, its History and Associations.* By W. R. Douthwaite, 1886.

of much interest in connection with the dramatic conventions of Shakespeare's time. The suggestion to which attention is invited in these pages is that the conventions of the Masque extended to the drama.

On one of the evenings during the revels of this year, the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple were guests at Gray's Inn, and this was the occasion of the performance of the Comedy of Errors:

> On the first of these Grand Nights, when the Sports were especially intended for the *Templarians*, the beholders were so numerous that there was no convenient room for the actors. The *Templarians* seem to have left the Hall, "discontented and displeased. After their departure the throngs and tumults did somewhat cease, although so much of them continued, as was able to disorder and confound any good Inventions whatsoever. In regard whereof it was thought good not to offer anything of Account, saving Dancing and Revelling with Gentlewomen; and after such sports, a *Comedy of Errors* (like to *Plautus his Menechmus*) was played by the players, so that night was begun and continued to the end in nothing but Confusion and Errors; whereupon it was ever afterwards called *The Night of Errors*." *

* W. R. Douthwaite, *Gray's Inn*, etc., quoting the *Gesta Grayorum*.

A few days afterwards the Prince of Purpoole entertained a company of "Great and Noble Personages," including the Earl of Southampton and the Earl of Essex. On the following day the "Prince of Purpoole," accompanied by the "Ambassador of Templaria," with about eighty members of either Inn, dined in state with the Lord Mayor at Crosby Place.

Such were the circumstances attending the performance of this comedy, and they afford a conspectus of the dramatic conditions of the period. All the theatrical companies were under the general supervision of the Master of the Royal Revels; and this performance of a comedy by one of the companies as a part of the Gray's Inn Revels is a point of much interest. The hall wherein the play was enacted still exists, and affords an excellent opportunity for the realisation of a dramatic presentation in the days of Shakespeare. The two doors in the screen, with the balcony above, may be compared with the interior of a playhouse shown in a previous page. These elemental conditions existed wherever plays were presented—in the Royal Palace, in the hall of an Elizabethan mansion, or in the yard of an Inn. They were reproduced in the theatres,

and several plays could be mentioned (including some of Shakespeare's) of which scenes were obviously fitted to these conditions. If we add that the traditional costume of Shakespeare's comedies is that of the sixteenth century, chiefly the distinctively English of that period, it might be concluded that we have all the conditions for an exact reproduction of a Shakespeare performance. We have (*a*) the play, (*b*) the costume, (*c*) the scene of the performance —what was, in effect, the theatre. All we have to do, therefore, is to give a costume recital of the play in this Hall, and the Elizabethan conditions are reproduced and realised? No: interesting as such an experiment is, this is not the case, for the simple reason that the audience is a nineteenth century one and not an Elizabethan audience. Let it be granted that no scenery was used in Shakespeare's time; but when we go about to reproduce that condition also, we are astray. The difference of time makes all the difference: it is a gap which must be bridged over somehow. No scenery was used in Shakespeare's time, because, by the conventions of dramatic representation, none was required. The scenery of the plays was contemporary life and manners; the scenery was outside, all around; the

"fustian country" was Shakespeare's London; behind the conventions of the stage was Elizabethan England.

The time is coming when the comedies and romantic plays of Shakespeare—and perhaps the tragedies also—will be placed in their relation to the events and the life of the time of their production; and then we shall be in a position to see how Shakespeare held the mirror up to nature and presented "the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure." The pioneer in this critical work is Mr Sydney Lee, and presently we shall consider his brilliant exegesis upon Love's Labour's Lost and The Merchant of Venice. When the Comedy of Errors is subjected to similar treatment, it will probably be found to turn upon some commercial rivalry between this country and the Netherlands. Ephesus, perhaps, stood for London, and Syracuse for Antwerp; or *vice versâ*.

Antipholus of Syracuse. Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands?

Dromio of Syracuse. Oh, sir, I did not look so low.

Act. III. Sc. ii.

At all events the scene of Act I. Sc. ii., "the Mart," would be realised by reference to the Royal

Exchange.* In this scene the merchant of Syracuse says:

> Within this hour it will be dinner-time:
> Till that, I'll view the manners of the town,
> Peruse the traders, gaze upon the buildings,
> And then return, and sleep within mine inn.

The foreign trader in London was a familiar figure. The story of the wreck at the beginning of the play would strike home to an audience in Shakespeare's London, one of the greatest ports of the world at that time; and this story was Shakespeare's invention; the incident does not occur in the source of the plot. The Ephesian Dromio comes and summons the Syracusan to dinner (mistaking him for the Ephesian Antipholus).

> My charge was but to fetch you from the mart
> Home to your house, the Phœnix, sir, to dinner:
> My mistress and her sister stays for you.

This corresponds with the habits of the merchant in Shakespeare's London, who dwelt where he carried on his business; and the houses of merchants were known by signs. There was probably more than

* Gresham's Burse was built in imitation of the great Burse at Antwerp; the architect was a Fleming. See *History of the Three Royal Exchanges*. By J. G. White, 1896.

one house with the sign of the Phœnix in London. The first scene of the last Act is "A street before a Priory." Of this there was more than one counterpart in Shakespeare's London. As to the use of Ephesus as the scene of the play, we may perhaps compare the following, from 2 Henry IV. (II. ii.):

Prince. Where sups he? doth the old boar feed in the old frank?
Bardolph. At the old place, my lord, in Eastcheap.
Prince. What company?
Page. Ephesians, my lord, of the old church.

But to leave mere conjecture, let us briefly consider Love's Labour's Lost, on which Mr Lee has thrown so much light. The scene is the King of Navarre's Park, and one of the noticeable facts about this play is that the scene is not changed; it is the king's park all through. But what Mr Lee has shown is (1) the intimate connection between contemporary French politics and the characters of the play; (2) the intense interest felt in London in the fortunes of Henry of Navarre, the Protestant claimant of the French throne; (3) that one of the incidents of the play actually took place in London.* In this

* "A new Study of *Love's Labour's Lost*," by S. L. Lee, *Gentleman's Magazine*, October, 1880.

admirable "study," Mr Lee points out that "the names of almost all the characters are actually identical with the contemporary leaders in French politics," and he states his belief that in the composition of his play, Shakespeare took a slight and amusing story, "and gave it a new and vital interest by grafting upon it heroes and incidents suggested by the popular sentiment as to French affairs prevailing in London at the time." With regard to the story itself—the idea of men exiling themselves from the society of women for three years for the purpose of study and self-improvement—this may possibly be found to have been indigenous, perhaps in London itself. We find the converse of the idea in Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*, produced in 1609, of which the scenes are laid in London. Here we have a woman's college thus satirically described (Act I. Sc. i.):—

> A new foundation, sir, here i' the town, of ladies that call themselves the collegiates; an order between courtiers and country-madams, that live from their husbands, and give entertainment to all the wits and braveries o' the time, as they call 'em; cry down or up what they like or dislike in a brain or a fashion, with most masculine, or rather hermaphroditical authority; and every day gain to their college some new probationer.
>
> *Clericus.* Who is the president?

True-wit. The grave and youthful matron, the lady Haughty.

For the demonstration of the connection between Love's Labour's Lost and contemporary French history, the reader must be referred to Mr Lee's "Study"; it is more directly to our purpose to dwell upon the incident which happened in London. It is an excellent illustration of Shakespeare's stage-land, the "fustian country" of his masquerade of contemporary life and manners. "It should be remembered," writes Mr Lee, "that England first opened negotiations worthy of the name with Russia in Elizabeth's reign, and that an important trading connection was soon after her accession established, in which she, in common with her people, took a lively interest." After describing the embassies between the two countries, he comes to the event which actually figures in the play, in the form of a masquerade.* This was the arrival of an ambassador from Russia in 1582, with instructions that he was not to return without a kinswoman of the Queen to be his master's wife. "Pissemsky (the ambassador) would listen to no refusal, and the Queen's protests were quite unavailing. At length she selected a bride. She

* *Love's Labour's Lost*, V. ii.

named Lady Mary Hastings, daughter of the Earl of Huntingdon, who was nearly related to her, and thereby satisfied the Czar's condition. In May 1583 an interview was ordered to take place between her and the Russian envoy and his suite. In order to flatter the Russian's notion of the importance of the occasion, an elaborate ceremonial was arranged. In the gardens of York House, then the residence of the Lord Chancellor, a large pavilion was erected, just under which sat Lady Mary, attended by divers great lords and maids of honour. A number of English noblemen were allowed to witness the proceedings."

Mr Lee goes on to shew the correspondence between the description of the scene which ensued and the travesty of it which occurs in the play. The scene was long afterwards remembered as an excellent joke, and although the death of the Czar intervened to save Lady Hastings from her fate, she became generally known—in the true spirit of Elizabethan masquerade—as the Empress of Muscovia. The pavilion in the gardens of York House is represented in the play by the pavilion in the park of the King of Navarre, and it does not seem possible to doubt that Mr Lee has discovered the source of the Russian

interlude in Shakespeare's comedy. The character of the Spaniard, Armado, who is called "a phantasm, a Monarcho," was drawn from the notorious "Phantastical Monarcho" who haunted the court of Queen Elizabeth, and afforded much sport for witty courtiers. On his death, the poet, Thomas Churchyard, wrote a mock elegy, called "The Phantasticall Monarchoes Epitaph." Thus have we, by the aid of Mr Lee's remarkable "study," penetrated beneath the veil of the play to the themes of current and topical interest beneath it. It should be added that we have merely glanced at some of the results, and the student is recommended to Mr Lee's article for the interesting details.

Hitherto the allusions to English topics in Shakespeare's foreign scenes have been imputed to the fine carelessness of genius; but if these scenes belonged to a recognised stage-convention, it is evident that such allusions are merely the result to be expected. They suggest of themselves, in fact, that the plays reflected contemporary life in England; they point the way to a wider interpretation of Shakespeare in relation to his own time. The poet wrote for a London audience, and he can scarcely be charged with infringement of the unities of the scene, if that

scene were merely the conventional device of masquerade and comedy. From the point of view of the Elizabethan audience, there was no incongruity, because the foreign scene was but a "fustian country," the foreign characters were but masqueraders. In the play we have been considering, the Frenchman, Lord Biron, says:

> Thou makest the triumviry, the corner-cap of society,
> The shape of Love's Tyburn that hangs up simplicity.

This use of Tyburn for a simile was quite natural on an Elizabethan stage in London. Biron's allusions to English games, too, were not incongruous: "All hid, all hid, an old infant play"; "More sacks to the Mill"; "And Nestor play at push-pin with the boys." Costard's allusion to the unpopular three-farthing piece: "Remuneration! O, that's the Latin word for three farthings," would provoke a chuckle, without a thought as to whether there were such a coin in the country of the Duke of Navarre. English popular pastimes are touched upon in a way that was both natural and pleasing to the audience. "But O, but O, the hobby horse is forgot."

> I'll make one in a dance, or so; or I will play
> On the tabor to the Worthies, and let them dance hay.

Allusions to other distinctively English topics could be enumerated, such as the horn-book, the painted cloth, the tumbler's hoop, etc. Such things followed inevitably from the traditions, conditions, and conventions of Shakespeare's stage.

> Cease to persuade, my loving Proteus ;
> Home-keeping youth have ever homely wits.

These words, which open the play of The Two Gentlemen of Verona, expressed a belief which was very firmly held by the upper class of Elizabethan Society. Travel was the fashion, and scions of noble houses qualified themselves for their positions in society, and for employment in state affairs, by performing the grand tour. Among numerous cases which could be cited was that of the eldest son of Lord Treasurer Burghley, Thomas Cecil, afterwards Duke of Exeter. This young gentleman travelled with his tutor, and the letters that passed between them and his lordship at home throw an interesting light, not only upon the contemporary modes of travelling, but incidentally upon the social condition of European countries in which they sojourned. The scene is Verona, and Valentine is about to take ship.

> Once more adieu ! my father at the road
> Expects my coming, there to see me shipp'd.

Of course "road" is here employed in its sense of port or harbour; and if the strictness of scene was not regarded, and the talk of foreign places, and the use of foreign names upon the stage were frankly accepted as a fustian mode or convention, the audience would call to mind the scenes of the departure of the gilded youth and youthful gallants at the port of London.

The friends of Proteus beseech his father Antonio

> To let him spend his time no more at home,
> Which would be great impeachment to his age,
> In having known no travel in his youth.

It is decided that Proteus shall follow Valentine to the "Emperor's" court. When taking leave of his love, the lady Julia, he says:

> My father stays my coming: answer not;
> The tide is now. . . .

Again the audience would think of the Thames. If Shakespeare had any serious thought of locality, he would not have sent his characters across country from Verona to Milan *by ship!* But the masquerade of these foreign names was perfectly understood by

playgoers. Panthino interrupts Launce in his famous interlude with the dog (II. iii.):

> Launce, away, away, aboard! thy master is shipped, and thou art to post after with oars. What's the matter? why weepest thou, man? Away, ass! you'll lose the tide, if you tarry any longer. . . . Tut, man, I mean thou'lt lose the flood, and, in losing the flood, lose thy voyage. . . .
>
> *Launce.* Lose the tide, and the voyage. . . . Why, man, if the river were dry, I am able to fill it with my tears; if the wind were down, I could drive the boat with my sighs.

This waiting upon the tide with departing ships was essentially a London topic; the whole scene derived its zest from being a transcript of contemporary London humours.

In Verona, before the departure of the youths, their destination is the court of the "Emperor." After their arrival, however, they are supposed to be at the court of the Duke of Milan. Such a discrepancy signified nothing to the playgoer. The point was that they were going to a court, and whether an exalted personage in the "fustian country" were an Emperor or a Duke mattered not at all.

When Launce next appears upon the scene, he and his master have arrived at Milan. He and

Speed encounter each other in a street: "Launce! by mine honesty, welcome to Padua!" says Speed, and invites his companion to the "alehouse." Padua or Milan, it was all one in stage-land, and the London alehouse equally appropriate in either. The scene of Act III. Sc. i. is *Milan*, at the Duke's palace, and presently the Duke says—"There is a lady in *Verona* here, whom I affect," etc. Such discrepancies are surprising enough when they are regarded seriously; but when we perceive them to be of the mere frippery of stage convention we can accept them as easily as did the Elizabethans.

In I. iii., at Verona, we have a reference to a cloister; in V. i., at Milan, the scene is an abbey. No painted scenery was required to bring such things before the eyes of the audience in an Elizabethan playhouse; their counterparts—perhaps it were more correct to say their originals—were to be seen in London. "Out at the postern, by the abbey wall" (V. i.) was a line, in all probability, suggested by a London locality.

The scenes in the forest on the frontiers of Mantua (V. i., iii., iv.) could also be realised without the aid of scenic art. All playgoers, all Londoners, knew the forest which almost encompassed London on the

Middlesex side. One of the band of outlaws in the forest says :

" By the bare scalp of Robin Hood's fat friar,
This fellow were a king for our wild faction ! "

Such an apparent incongruity was perfectly natural when the whole foreign framework of the play was given and accepted as a masquerade of London.

The attitude of self-abasement in gallantries, satirised in this play, was a characteristic of Elizabeth's court ; it was a part of that appetite for the " high fantastical," which degenerated into excesses after the time of Shakespeare's zenith, and was mercilessly lashed by Jonson. The lover laid himself at his lady's feet, and craved to be her " servant." This is the relation between Valentine and Silvia (II. i., iv.) :

Val. Madam and mistress, a thousand good-morrows.
Speed (*aside*). O, give ye good even ! here's a million of manners !
Sil. Sir Valentine and servant, to you two thousand.
Speed (*aside*). He should give her interest, and she gives it him.
Val. As you enjoin'd me, I have writ your letter
Unto the secret nameless friend of yours ;
Which I was much unwilling to proceed in,
But for my duty to your ladyship.
Sil. I thank you, gentle servant : 'tis very clerkly done.

This short quotation may serve as a sample of the strain. Compare Ben Jonson, *Every Man out of his Humour* (III. ix.) and *Epicoene* (II. iii.; III. vi.; IV. iv.), where the scenes are laid in London. A few lines from the first-named source may be given:

Fastidius Brisk. A second good-morrow to my fair mistress.

Saviolina. Fair servant, I'll thank you a day hence, when the date of your salutation comes forth. . . . Here, servant, if you will play, come.

Fastidius. Instantly, sweet lady.

In *Epicoene, or The Silent Woman*, Sir John Daw elects himself "servant" to *Epicoene*, who divinely condescends to be his "mistress." Let the following suffice as a specimen:

Clerimont. Pray, Mistress Epicoene, let's see your verses, we have Sir John Daw's leave: do not conceal your servant's merit, and your own glories.

Epicoene. They'll prove my servant's glories if you have his leave so soon.

Among remaining English topics in The Two Gentlemen of Verona are Speed's reference to the A B C and to "the souling" custom at Hollowmas. The A B C was a schoolbook still in use in Shakespeare's time. In his description of the purlieus of St

Paul's churchyard, John Stow wrote: "This street is now called Paternoster Row, because of stationers or text writers that dwelt there, who wrote and sold all sorts of books then in use, namely, A B C with the Pater noster, Ave, Creed, Graces, etc." Hallowmass was a holy feast, probably founded on a pre-Christian celebration of the gifts of Nature and the harvest. The making and distribution of soul-cakes was the occasion for transmitting to the poorer brethren some of the necessaries and comforts of life in view of the coming winter. Hallowmass exists in the present All Saints' Day (November 1st); Allhallow Even, the day previous to the holy day, was the day referred to by Speed. It was difficult to maintain the original intention which underlay the custom; in Shakespeare's time it had become a pretext for begging. The custom still exists, one of the traditional links between us and the England of Shakespeare's time.

It is probable that we have a reminiscence of Shakespeare's youth in the reference to the Whitsun plays (IV. iv.):

Julia. About my stature: for, at Pentecost,
When all our pageants of delight were play'd,
Our youth got me to play the woman's part,
And I was trimm'd in Madame Julia's gown.

The miracle-plays had not perceptibly declined in popularity in Shakespeare's youthful days, and Coventry was the chief centre and home of pageants in the midland and southern counties. But so general were these religious and moral plays that he may have witnessed and participated in them in some place nearer even than Coventry; perhaps in Stratford, even if no record exists.*

There can be little doubt that Shakespeare further drew upon some dramatic recollections of his youth in his sketch of the artisan players in Midsummer Night's Dream. The humours of this interlude, like most of the fairy element of the play, belonged to Elizabethan England, and the way in which the scenery of the play bore reference to London has already been suggested in the previous chapter.

> And in the wood, a league without the town,
> Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
> To do observance to a morn of May,
> There will I stay for thee.

This recalled to the audience the May-day custom in London, when the youth of the city went forth into the

* Mr Pollard (*English Miracle Plays*, Introduction, p. xxiii) states that we have record of plays "in at least thirty English towns and villages, some of them quite small places."

fields and woods to bring the summer home. The greater part of the play is laid in "a wood near Athens"; but the adventures of Lysander and Demetrius, Helena and Hermia, were a sublimation of experiences which were familiar to the youth of London, and dear to the remembrance of older play-goers. No matter how transfigured by genius and altered by art, the general application to their own experiences was sufficient to enable the audience to realise the scenes in the "mind's eye"; to them there was no incongruity in the association of the elves of English fairyland with the wood near Athens, because they were thinking of a wood near London.

At the close of the first meeting of the actors in Quince's house (I. ii.) he appoints a rehearsal for the following night: ". . . meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town," and more particularly, "At the Duke's oak we meet." The "palace wood" might have suggested St James's Park, or, as that was enclosed, perhaps Hyde Park. The Duke's oak was probably a well-known landmark. Lysander described the same wood as "a league without the town." The point of contact with the audience was that London was belted with woods (of which Hyde Park formed part).

How contemporary events led to the composition of The Merchant of Venice has been demonstrated by Mr Sidney L. Lee in the masterly paper to which reference has already been made.* Mr Lee's results may be enumerated thus: (1) that the edict of Edward I. expelling Jews from England had ceased to be strictly operative; (2) that there were Jews in London in Elizabeth's reign; (3) that the production of The Merchant of Venice bore reference to the trial of the Jewish physician Lopez in London. Without trespassing upon Mr Lee's paper, it may be said that the general inter-relation between the characters in the Lopez affair is very ingeniously suggested as parallel to the play. Mr Lee shows further almost convincing grounds of probability that Lopez was well known both to Shakespeare and to Richard Burbadge, who sustained the character of Shylock; but that Lopez was the original of Shylock remains only a suggestion. As Mr Lee is careful to point out, "it is quite possible that had we the means of learning their characters and lives, Lopez's cousin,

* *The Original of Shylock*, by S. L. Lee, *Gentleman's Magazine*, February 1880. For references to some subsequent contributions by Mr Lee on the same subject, see Preface, "Temple Shakespeare" edition of the play.

his Jewish friend Geronimo, and any of the 'other divers kinsmen here,' to whom Coke referred at the Doctor's trial, would present as striking a likeness to Shylock as Roderigo [Lopez] himself."

The points of chief interest for our present purpose are these, (*a*) that it appears to have been Shakespeare's business to adapt an existing play* as a commentary on current events; (*b*) that these events took place in London, where they occasioned intense excitement; (*c*) that the play was produced in London.

On the subject generally of the presence of Jews in England before their re-admission by Cromwell, much light has been thrown by the researches of Mr Lucien Wolf.† The reader may be recommended to study Mr Wolf's paper as a complement of that of Mr Lee. For the purpose of our present enquiry —the connection of Shakespeare's play with London —attention may be called to the following points: (1) that Jews were living in London under the guise of Lombards in 1376; (2) that on the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492, a large number settled

* See Mr Gollancz's Preface, "Temple Shakespeare."

† *The Middle Age of Anglo-Jewish History* (1290-1656). Publications of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition, No. 1.

in the Low Countries, chiefly in Antwerp and Amsterdam; (3) that owing to the intimate trading relations with these cities many Jews became settled in London; (4) that Jewish names ceased to be distinctive; (5) that in countries where the law did not recognise them as denizens, Jews lived as ordinary foreigners.

Now, one of the features of Shakespeare's London was the settlement of foreigners in prescribed areas, or liberties. There was the settlement of the merchants of the Steelyard, or Hanse merchants, "Petty Almaine" (Germany) in Thames Street; eastward of the bridge, also in Thames Street, was the settlement of Netherlanders, "Petty Flanders"; there was a French settlement in Bishopsgate, "a quadrant, called Petty France, of Frenchmen dwelling there," writes Stow in his Survey.

If Jews had sheltered themselves in Lombard Street as Lombard bankers and merchants, it is highly probable that in Elizabeth's time—when the Dutch colony had become vastly increased (*teste* Stow) owing to the rapid extension of trade with the Low Countries—many Jews, perhaps in the guise of Netherlanders, were numbered among the settlers of "Petty Flanders." These foreign merchants and

traders resorted to the Royal Exchange in the pursuit of their business. The design of this central building of the city was Flemish, in imitation of the great Burse at Antwerp. "The inscription on the building," writes Mr J. G. White, in his recent history of the Royal Exchange, "as shown by prints of the period, was in French, Dutch, Latin, and English."

Shylock. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances.

The sensitiveness of merchants to the public opinion of the Exchange is illustrated in Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, where Kitely, "the rich merchant i' the Old Jewry," exclaims: "Lost i' my fame for ever, talk for th' Exchange."

The importance of the criticism which has been bestowed on this play lies in the fact that it was formerly one of the strongest supports of the argument that Shakespeare must have travelled in continental countries. It was assumed that owing to the proscription of Jews in England, the original of the astonishingly faithful portraiture of Shylock must have been studied abroad, probably in Venice itself. And, in the words of Mr Lee, "It is the minuteness with which the features peculiar to Shylock's

race are expressed in the play that places him in a different category from Shakespeare's portrayal of other foreigners. His Romans could be readily transformed into Englishmen, and such Roman spirit as they do possess is traceable to Plutarch. Few of his Italians are very strictly localised. Of Shylock almost alone of all Shakespeare's characters can it be truly said that it would be impossible for him to undergo a change of nationality without rendering his character utterly meaningless." But the net results of the investigations of Mr Lee and of Mr Wolf may be stated thus: (*a*) that the play was fitted to current events and personages in London; (*b*) that there were Jews in London. To this we may, perhaps, now add, that while Dr Lopez may have afforded opportunities for the study of Jewish characteristics, the actual original of Shylock may have been a Jewish banker or merchant in London.

Coming now to The Taming of the Shrew, it may be pointed out—granting the oriental origin of the idea*—that the presentation in the Induction is wholly Elizabethan. It is indeed a valuable Elizabethan document. There is no masquerade here;

* *See* Preface, "Temple Shakespeare."

it is a realistic cameo of the life of the time. The character of the lord is no less interesting than the humours of Sly are diverting. It is the pleasure-seeking Elizabethan noble who comes in fresh from hunting, solicitous for the well-being of his hounds. Seeing the recumbent Sly, he instantly devises excellent pastime out of this unpromising subject.

We have now dealt with all the comedies mentioned in the *Palladis Tamia* of Francis Meres in 1598, with the exception of the doubtful case of *Love's Labour's Won*. In this year Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* was produced by the Chamberlain's Company, of which Shakespeare was a member, and Shakespeare himself sustained one of the characters, probably that of the elder Lorenzo (afterwards Kno'well). It is a trite remark to say that Jonson had a powerful mind; but intellectual force was as prominently characteristic of Jonson as gentleness was noticeable in the honey-tongued Shakespeare. Jonson was steeped in the literature of ancient Rome, and had a strong impulse to portray contemporary humours, after the Horatian manner, in dramatic form. Shakespeare drew his inspiration whence he drew his stories, from the less severe Italian school, the southern clime of love and

romance. It is interesting to observe his play upon the word "humours" in his succeeding comedies. Hitherto he had used the word in its sense of the ludicrous, the laughable, the absurd; Jonson employed it in the sense of the master passion of Pope's *Essay on Man*. It was the strong particular impulse, and Jonson's central idea was the tendency of this "humour" to over-balance human character. Perhaps there was a friendly debate at issue between the two poets on this point. Not only does Shakespeare harp upon the word "humours" in his plays of this time, but in his next comedy, the Merry Wives of Windsor, he seems to have "bettered the instruction," both in respect of realism and "humours." The play is a transcript of Elizabethan manners, and in addition to the Shakespearean humours of Shallow and Slender and Falstaff, he gave a study of the Jonsonian "humour" in the jealousy of Ford. Falstaff's allusion to London—"and smell like Bucklersbury in simple time" (III. iii. 79)—has already been noticed. There is another London allusion in his next speech (*ib.*, 84)—"Thou might'st as well say I love to walk by the Counter gate"—a reference to the prison called the Compter in the Poultry, a few yards from Bucklersbury.

It must have been a refreshment to the spirit of Shakespeare to encounter the strong intelligence and the firm convictions of Ben Jonson. We naturally look for some results of this interesting collision, and it is probable that we have them in the Merry Wives. Shakespeare recurred serenely to his own peculiar vein of Italian masquerade, romance, and comedy; only after this time it is observable that he is less heedful to preserve the consistency of his scene; the Elizabethan appears through the foreign disguise with greater frankness. Jonson went on his stormful way towards the goal of his ideal. In his next play, *Every Man out of his Humour*, the characters have all Italian names, while the scenes are nearly all laid in London; and the following lines (IV. v.) are indicative of Jonson's attitude towards stage traditions and conventions:—

Sogliardo. I, he is my Pylades, and I am his Orestes: how like you this conceit?

Carlo. O, it's an old stale enterlude device.

Readers of the preface to As You Like It in the "Temple Shakespeare" will be prepared for the claim that this play is thoroughly English. Its foundation is a ballad belonging to the Robin Hood epos. To the story of the ballad, Thomas Lodge

added a love story, and gave the whole a French dress. This novel is the immediate source of the story in Shakespeare's play. Lodge laid his story in Bordeaux and the Forest of Ardennes. True to his habit, when he brought the story back to England, Shakespeare retained the foreign garb: this fitted the English mode of the time — the tendency to masquerade, the delight in foreign manners; but he does not name Bordeaux, and Ardennes is given an English equivalent in Arden. Shakespeare may have composed this play with the Forest of Sherwood—the haunt of Robin Hood—in his mind, but it is certain that when the play was produced in a London playhouse without scenery, the audience realised the scene by reference to the woods and forests with which they were familiar around the city. Nay, is it not more than probable that the dramatist fitted the story to these scenes? A city and a forest near; these were the scenes he found in Lodge, and these became, for his purpose as a working dramatist, English scenes. Ardennes, shortened to his own mother's family name of Arden, became realised in the woodland scenes whither we accompanied Gerard in the last chapter.

There are one or two points of detail which we will note as appertaining to the London *locale* before passing on to the next play. First, in the description of the moralisings of Jaques, II. i. 52 :—

> . . . anon a careless herd,
> Full of the pasture, jumps along by him
> And never stays to greet him ; 'Ay,' quoth Jaques,
> 'Sweep on, you fat and greasy citizens ;
> 'Tis just the fashion : wherefore do you look
> Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there ?'

The second point occurs in the wit duel between Orlando and Jaques, III. ii. 287-292 :—

Jaques. You are full of pretty answers. Have you not been acquainted with goldsmiths' wives, and conned them out of rings ?

Orlando. Not so ; but I answer you right painted cloth, from whence you have studied your questions.

The description of his own melancholy given by Jaques (IV. i. 18) leads to an expression which very probably had reference to the Jonsonian idea of humour : "and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness." Rosalind's satirical description of the Elizabethan traveller may be noted for its reference to Venice—the city which exercised so much fascination over the minds of cultured

Englishmen in Shakespeare's day, the city which was so frequently the "fustian country" of the Elizabethan stage :—

> Farewell, Monsieur Traveller : look you lisp and wear strange suits ; disable all the benefits of your own country ; be out of love with your nativity and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are ; or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola.

The scenes of Much Ado about Nothing are laid in Messina, and the outward texture of the play is Italian, but it was Italy reflected in Elizabethan London, where Italian modes were the fashion. The characters are English in Italian masquerade. Messina is Shakespeare's London transfigured by illusion—the familiar made alluring by the fantastic idea of the remote ; the customary attuned to the romance of the distant. The introduction of the masked revellers, in this masquerade (II. i.) suggests an analogy with Hamlet, where a play is presented within the play. A single instance indicative of the masking vein may be given. Beatrice and Benedick, masked, among the revellers, continue their wit-combat, and Beatrice says—"That I was disdainful, and that I had my good wit out of the 'Hundred Merry Tales' :—well, this was Signior

Benedick that said so." This was perhaps the most widely known of all books in England in Shakespeare's time.

The humours of the watch are wholly Elizabethan, possibly a burlesque on the Statutes of the Streets, imprinted 1595. There is a tradition that the prototype of Dogberry was a citizen of Cornhill. The tradition is not very well authenticated, but it is appropriate in point of locality. If the original of Dogberry were actually associated with Cornhill, it was probably in connection with the "Tun upon Cornhill"—the city prison for "night-walkers and other suspicious persons," in the words of Stow. "To this prison," continues Stow, "the night-watches of this city committed not only night-walkers, but also other persons, as well spiritual as temporal, whom they suspected of incontinence, and punished them according to the customs of the city." Stow elsewhere says that it was "a strong prison made of timber, called a cage, with a pair of stocks therein set upon it, and this was for night-walkers." The watch in the play is a night-watch; Conrade and Boracheo are apprehended as night-walkers and conspirators; the scene of their charge is a prison (IV. ii.); and it is

highly probable that the conditions suggested to an Elizabethan the night-watch prison on Cornhill. It is curious to find among the Domestic State Papers of Elizabeth's reign, in the year 1586, a letter written by Lord Burghley to Sir Francis Walsingham, which seems to indicate that Shakespeare's ridicule of the watch was a topical subject —that the watch had, in fact, become a byword for pompous stupidity. The passage is as follows:

"As I came from London, homeward, in my coach," he says, "I saw, at every town's end, the number of ten or twelve standing with long staves, and until I came to Enfield, I thought no other of them but that they had stayed for avoiding of the rain, or to drink at some alehouses, for so they did stand under pentices at alehouses: but at Enfield, finding a dozen in a plump, when there was no rain, I bethought myself that they were appointed as watchmen for the apprehending of such as are missing; and thereupon I called some of them to me apart, and asked them wherefore they stood there, and one of them answered, to take three young men; and demanding how they should know the persons, one answered with the words, marry my Lord, by intelligence of their favor. What mean you by that, said I. Marry, said they, one of the parties hath a hooked nose; and have you, quoth I, no other mark? No, said they. And then I asked who appointed them, and they answered, one Banks a head constable, whom I willed to be sent to me. Surely, sir, whosoever had the charge from you, hath used the matter negligently; for these watchmen stand so

openly in plumps as no suspected person will come near them, and if they be no better instructed but to find three persons by one of them having a hooked nose, they may miss thereof. And thus I thought good to advertise you, that the Justices who had the charge, as I think, may use the matter more circumspectly."—From Theobalds, 10 Aug. 1586.

Mr Halliwell Phillipps was of opinion that Twelfth Night "was produced in the season of 1601-2, most probably on January the 5th." Shakespeare's company usually performed at the Blackfriars Theatre in the winter, at the Globe in summer; we may conclude therefore that it was first acted at Blackfriars. When the production of a play was in contemplation for some state or special occasion, it was the custom to give a preliminary performance or performances in the theatre, as a final test of the proficiency of the company in their parts. It is highly probable therefore that this play was produced on twelfth night preceding the performance before the benchers and the students of the Middle Temple on the occasion of their feast on February 2nd, 1601-2. The reader is referred to the Preface of the play in the Temple Shakespeare edition for the contemporary notice of this performance, from the Diary of John Manningham, who was a member of the Middle Temple at the time. The perform-

ance took place in the beautiful hall of the Middle Temple, "nearly the only building," says Mr Halliwell-Phillipps, "now remaining in London in which it is known that any of Shakespeare's dramas were represented during the author's life-time." The other case is the Hall of Gray's Inn, where the Comedy of Errors was produced, as already noticed. Mr Halliwell-Phillipps continues : *

"This representation of Twelfth Night took place at the Feast of the Purification, February the 2nd, one of the two grand festival days of the lawyers, on which occasion professional actors were annually engaged at the Middle Temple, the then liberal sum of ten pounds being given to them for a single performance. There is no doubt that the comedy was performed by the Lord Chamberlain's servants, and very little that Shakespeare himself was one of the actors who were engaged. Twelfth Night was appreciated at an early period as one of the author's most popular creations. There is not only the testimony of Manningham in its favour, but Leonard Digges, in the verses describing this most attractive of Shakespeare's acting dramas, expressly alludes to the estimation in which the part of Malvolio was held by the frequenters of the theatre."

This play has the sea as its background; the inception of the action is a story of shipwreck. In this respect it stands related to the Comedy of Errors

* Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare, Vol. I. p. 183 (6th ed.).

and the Tempest; the incident of the wreck in the Winter's Tale may bring that play also within the group of sea-plays. But Twelfth Night is the chief of this group, and our remarks on this play, tending to show how these stories of the sea appealed to an Elizabethan audience, will apply equally to all the sea-plays.

The connection between Shakespeare's London and the sea has already been touched upon (*ante*, p. 16). The points to be noted are these: (1) the frequent presence of the fleet in the Thames below the bridge; the ships rode at anchor off Tilbury, sometimes they would sail up to Blackwall; the flagship of Admiral Drake lay off Deptford, a popular and notorious object, a visible symbol of the connection between the port of London and its protector, the English navy. (2) The large amount of merchant shipping in the Thames; the activity at the London wharves and landing stages, where vessels were laden and unladen, and passengers embarked and disembarked. (3) Above bridge the Thames was the chief highway of London. The aspect of the river between London Bridge and Westminster bore a striking resemblance to the Grand Canal of Venice. The landing stairs on either side of the river, at short distances, were

used by the rank and fashion of the time; fine ladies, attended by splendid gallants, took boat or barge as the usual mode of conveyance. These boats, barges, and wherries were the Elizabethan gondolas, and the watermen who plied for hire at every landing stage were the gondoliers.

There was a connecting link between these three points of the Navy, the merchant and passenger shipping, and the Elizabethan gondolas of "the silent highway." The link was that the watermen, "the gondoliers" of Shakespeare's London, were in the first place sailors, either in the Royal or the mercantile navy. One of these men was John Taylor, the water poet (so called after his vocation), and from a pamphlet which he published called *The True Cause of the watermen's suit concerning players, and the Reasons that their playing on London side is their extreme Hindrances*, we have ample evidence of the enormous attraction exercised by the stage in Shakespeare's time and of the intimate contact between playgoers and the watermen.

In the month of January last 1613, there was a motion made by some of the better sort of the Company of watermen, that it was necessary for the relief of such a decayed multitude to petition his Majesty that the players might not have a playhouse in London or in

Middlesex within four miles of the city on that side of the Thames. . . First, I did briefly declare part of the services that watermen had done in Queen Elizabeth's reign of famous memory, in the voyage to Portugal with the right honourable and never to be forgotten Earl of Essex ; then after that, how it pleased God, in that great deliverance in the year 1588, to make watermen good serviceable instruments with their loss of lives and limbs to defend their prince and country. Moreover, many of them served with Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, Sir Martin Frobisher, and others. Besides, in Cadiz action, the Island Voyage, in Ireland, in the Low Countries, and in the narrow seas they have been, as in duty they were bound, at continual command, so that every summer 1500 or 2000 of them were employed to the places aforesaid. . . .

Afterwards the players began to play on the Bankside, and to leave playing in London and Middlesex, for the most part, then there went such great concourse of people by water that the small number of watermen remaining at home were not able to carry them, by reason of the court, the terms, the players, and other employments, so that we were enforced and encouraged, hoping that this golden stirring world would have lasted ever, to take and entertain men and boys, . . . so that the number of watermen, and those that live and are maintained by them, and by the only labour of the oar and the scull, betwixt the bridge of Windsor and Gravesend, cannot be fewer than forty thousand ;* the cause of the greater

* This includes their families. Stow says: "Omitting to speak of great ships and other vessels of burthen, there pertaineth to the cities of London, Westminster, and borough of

half of which multitude, hath been the players playing on the Bankside, for I have known three companies besides the bear-baiting at once there, to wit, the Globe, the Rose, and the Swan.

The grievance of the watermen was a serious one. Owing to the peacefulness of the times no draught was made upon them to serve in the royal navy; two of the theatres—the Rose and the Swan—were closed and deserted; only the Globe and the Bear Garden remained. "The players have all," says Taylor, excepting Shakespeare's company, then known as the King's men, "left their usual residency on the Bankside, and do play in Middlesex far remote from the Thames, so that every day in the week they do draw unto them three or four thousand people that were used to spend their monies by water." The figures given by Taylor are of great interest, and enable us to form some conception of the extent to which the river entered into the daily life of Shakespeare's London. The presence of the sovereign, the court, and the nobility at the various landing-stages; the passing hither and thither of barges and boats of every rank

Southwark, above the number, as is supposed, of 2000 wherries and other small boats, whereby 3000 poor men at the least be set on work and maintained."

and description; the connection of this busy and picturesque scene with the port of London, with the navy, and the ocean beyond; all this formed the most distinctive feature of Shakespeare's London, and it was the setting of those sea-plays we have now under consideration.

Taylor calls attention to the contact of watermen with great personages, and infers thence a plea for the favourable consideration of their case. Suggesting a comparison in this respect with other callings, he says: "by how much the more a waterman is near to his Majesty, to the Queen's Majesty, to the Princess Highness, to the nobility, the gentry, and the best of the commonalty of this kingdom, and sometimes of foreign nations." If we look at a map or view of Shakespeare's London with that passage in mind, and some knowledge of Elizabethan costume, we can realise scenes at the landing stairs of the river which must have been very familiar to Shakespeare. To conclude with Taylor: "a waterman," he says, "many times hath his sovereign by the hand, to stay him in and out the barge, where there is not above an inch betwixt life and death, the barge being then the royal court, and being but a door betwixt the king and them, they are at that time

gentlemen of the privy chamber, or yeomen of the guard at least."

Some of the expressions and allusions in Twelfth Night, which serve to mark the connection of the sea with the city of the play, may be summarily noticed. Of such are Sir Toby's "you mistake, knight: 'accost' is front her, board her, woo her, assail her" (I. iii. 59-60), and Maria's "will you hoist sail, sir? here lies your way," with Viola's reply, "No, good swabber; I am to hull here a little longer" (I. v. 215-217). The reference to sailor's head-gear—"Though now you have no sea-cap on your head" (III. iv. 364), on the occasion of the arrest of Antonio, may be coupled with the duke's speech when Antonio is brought before him (V. i. 54-62):

> That face of his I do remember well;
> Yet, when I saw it last, it was besmear'd
> As black as vulcan in the smoke of war:
> A bawbling vessel was he captain of
> For shallow draught and bulk unprizable;
> With which such scathful grapple did he make,
> With the most noble bottom of our fleet,
> That very envy and the tongue of loss
> Cried fame and honour to him.

As connected with Elizabethan sea-faring, the

simile used by Maria to describe Malvolio's smiling may be noticed (III. iii. 84), "he does smile his face into more lines than is in the new map with the augmentation of the Indies." The arrival of Antonio and Sebastian (III. iii.) in the city may be compared with a similar scene in The Comedy of Errors. Sebastian says :

> Shall we go see the reliques of this town ?
> . . . . . .
> I pray you, let us satisfy our eyes
> With the memorials and the things of fame
> That do renown this city.
> . . . . . .
> *Antonio.* . . .
> In the south suburbs, at the Elephant,
> Is best to lodge : I will bespeak our diet,
> Whiles you beguile the time and feed your knowledge
> With viewing of the town : . . .

When Viola, at the beginning of the play, arrived in the town, she underwent her metamorphosis into a boy at the house of the sea-captain who escorted her. The circumstance is recurred to after the meeting of Viola with her brother (V. i.)—

> That I am Viola : which to confirm,
> I'll bring you to a captain in this town,
> Where lie my maiden weeds. . . .

Duke. Give me thy hand ;
And let me see thee in thy woman's weeds.
Viola. The captain that did bring me first on shore
Hath my maid's garments. . . .

Among the signs of the presence of sailors in London, noticed by Stow, was the large storehouse for ship's victuals on the site of the dissolved monastery called the New Abbey, eastward of Tower Hill. Besides this storehouse, "convenient ovens are built there for baking of biscuits to serve Her Majesty's navy, etc." Sir Francis Drake lived at Erber House, Downgate Street. Wapping was the haunt of sailors then, as it was in the later time celebrated in the songs of Dibdin, and it was from these sailors that Hakluyt gathered the materials for his book of *English Voyages* (1598). Here, at Wapping, was "the usual place of execution for hanging pirates and sea-rovers, at the low-water mark, and there to remain till three tides had overflowed them." From Wapping to Ratcliffe was "a continual street inhabited by sailor's victuallers."

Before we notice an unmistakable topographical allusion to London in this play, let us enumerate a few of the rents and holes in the Illyrian gauze which covers it: Sir Andrew's allusion to "fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting" (I. iii. 98); to "masques

and revels" (*ib.*, 121); Sir Toby's reference to Mistress Mall's picture (*ib.*, 135); references to alehouses (II. iii. 29; *ib.*, 96); Sir Toby's allusion to the Spitalfields weavers (*ib.*, 61); references to Puritans (*ib.*, 151 *et seq.*); Brownists (III. ii. 33); the bed of Ware (*ib.*, 51); bear-baiting (II. v. 10). The direct allusion to London is in the following lines (V. i. 39-43):—

Clown. Primo, secundo, tertio, is a good play; and the old saying is, the third pays for all: the triplix, sir, is a good tripping measure; or the bells of Saint Bennet, sir, may put you in mind; one, two, three.

Stow describes four London Churches dedicated to St Bennet—viz., St Bennet Finke, St Bennet Grass Church, St Bennet Sherehog, and St Bennet Huthe or Hythe. With the premise that the allusion might be to either of these, we will state reasons for the conclusion that the reference was to the last named, St Bennet Hythe.

Twelfth Night, as we have seen, was produced at the Blackfriars Theatre, and this Church was near in Thames Street, "over against Paul's wharf, a proper parish church," says Stow. The allusions in the play to puritans were probably suggested by the locality: Blackfriars was a nest of these professors, a large number of whom were feather-makers, and as

such ministered to the worship of mammon and vanity, an inconsistency which did not escape the satirists of the time. Moreover there are three other speeches by the Clown, which in all probability point to neighbourhood of Blackfriars:

(1)

Sir Toby. Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale?

Clown. Yes, by Saint Anne, and ginger shall be hot i' the mouth too. (II. iii. 123-7.)

(2)

Viola. Art thou a churchman?

Clown. No such matter, sir: I do live by the church; for I do live at my house, and my house doth stand by the church. (III. i. 4-7.)

(3)

Clown. To see this age! A sentence is but a cheveril glove to a good wit: how quickly the wrong side may be turned outward!

The first and second of these quotations probably refer to the Church of St Anne in the immediate neighbourhood of the playhouse; and the third was probably suggested by the glovers, who, like the feather-makers, dwelt and carried on business in Blackfriars.

Concerning the Church, Stow wrote as follows:—

There is a parish of St Anne within the precincts of Blackfriars, which was pulled down with the Friars Church, by Sir Thomas Carden; but in the reign of Queen Mary, he being forced to find a Church to the inhabitants, allowed them a lodging chamber above a stair, which since that time, to wit, in the year 1597, fell down, and was again by collection therefore made, new built and enlarged in the same year, and was dedicated on the 11th of December.

Finally, in his speech referring to St Bennet's, the Clown addresses Orsino, the Duke, "the bells of St Bennet, sir, *may put you in mind.*" It was in keeping with the license accorded the clown that he should have referred to his own residence near the Church of St Anne, and the question arises, what was the nature of the pointed allusion to the Duke in connection with St Bennet's? That question may not at present receive a decisive answer; but it provokes a twofold conjecture of sufficient interest to be briefly stated.

Orsino belongs to the class of characters usually sustained by Shakespeare in the plays performed by his company, and if we take his subsequent purchase of a house in the neighbourhood as an indication that he may have been residing in Thames Street, somewhere between Baynard's Castle and

Paul's Wharf, at the time of the production of this play, the possibility arises that in these words spoken by the Clown—perhaps a piece of "gag" retained in the playhouse copy—we have actually a personal allusion to the poet.

The other supposition rests upon the fact that the Earl of Pembroke resided at Baynard's Castle, south of the Blackfriars precinct, and therefore probably within earshot of the bells of St Bennet's. If we may suppose that it was understood between the poet and his patron that the play was composed in his honour, and that in the guise of the ruler of Illyria, the English Earl was presented in a complimentary masquerade, then the words would not be "gag," but Shakespeare's, and the pointed personal allusion which they convey would have been directed to the Earl and not to the poet.

The influence of Ben Jonson may be traced in the workmanship of this play no less than in the Merry Wives. Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Slender are both derivatives of the vein struck by Jonson in his character of Stephen in *Every Man in his Humour*. The resemblance between these characters is general and all-pervading, since they are studies of the same type, but there is one parallel sufficiently close for

particular mention. First, Jonson, *Every Man* (Actus primus, scena secunda), in the play as originally performed by Shakespeare's company:

Stephano. Fo, the stockings be good enough for this time of the yeere; but I'll haue a payre of silke, ere it be long: I think my legge would shew well in a silke hose.

Musco. I, afore God, would it rarely well.

Stephano. In sadnesse, I thinke it would, I have a reasonable good legge.

. . . . . .

Stephano. Nay not so neither, but I speake to serue my turne.

Lorenzo, junior. Your turne? why cousin, a gentleman of so faire sort as you are, of so true cariage, so speciall good parts; of so deare and choice estimation; one whose lowest condition beares the stampe of a great spirit . . . and will you now (with nice modestie) hide such reall ornaments as these, and shadow their glorie as a Millinars wife doth her wrought stomacher, with a smoakie lawne or a blacke cipresse?

Compare Twelfth Night, I. iii. 133-150: from which the following is taken:

Sir Toby. Wherefore are these things hid? Wherefore have these gifts a curtain before 'em? are they like to take dust, like Mistress Mall's picture? * . . . What dost

* Probably the notorious Moll Cutpurse, the subject of a book published in 1610, "The Madde Prancks of Merry Moll of

thou mean? Is it a world to hide virtues in? I did think, by the excellent constitution of thy leg, it was formed under the star of a galliard.

Sir Andrew. Ay, 'tis strong, and it does indifferent well in a flame-coloured stock, etc.

The character of Malvolio is an essay in the Jonsonian "humour"; a study of over-weening self-love, with its correlative absence of a sense of the ridiculous. "O, you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite," says Olivia (I. v. 97-8); and Maria describes his "humour" thus: "the best persuaded of himself, so crammed, as he thinks, with excellencies, that it is his grounds of faith that all that look on him love him" (II. iii. 162-5). The comedy is full of Shakespeare's own joyous humour, and Malvolio stands for the detached and supercilious puritans, the type criticised by Gratiano in the Merchant of Venice:

> There are a sort of men whose visages
> Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
> And do a wilful stillness entertain,
> With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
> Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
> As who should say 'I am Sir Oracle,
> And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!'

the Bankside," and of a play, *The Roaring Girle, or Moll Cut Purse.* By T. Middleton and T. Dekhar: London, 1611, 4to.

The affectation of the relation of servant and mistress between lovers, so freely satirised by Jonson as a London "humour," is again recurred to (III. i. 108-110), and the "fustian riddle" (II. v. 119) has a decidedly Jonsonian flavour. The object of pointing out these things here is that they strengthen the belief that Shakespeare, no less than Jonson, drew his characters from contemporary types, although he retained the foreign masquerade, which Jonson discarded. If this be so, there can be no doubt that many of the originals of his marvellous portraitures were denizens of London.

The relation between the characters of Sir Toby Belch and Sir John Falstaff (*see* Preface, Temple Shakespeare) suggests the possibility of a common prototype. Sir Toby's addiction to sack recalls the Falstaff of the historical plays, and his making Sir Andrew his milch-cow reminds us of the Falstaff of Henry IV., part 2, who replenished his wasted means at the expense of Robert Shallow, Esquire. In this connection we may recur to the suggestion made in a previous chapter (*ante*, p. 39) with regard to a possible original of Falstaff. The inhabitant of the house, near the west end of Tower Street, with the "high tower of brick," Sir Percevall Hart, "a jolly courtier

and knight harbinger to the Queen," was in the way to be well known to Shakespeare and his associates of the Lord Chamberlain's company, and the term "jolly," in its Elizabethan sense, points to characteristics which distinguish both Sir John and Sir Toby. The resuscitation of this character-type in Twelfth Night is in itself an argument for the interpretation of the play as a comedy of Elizabethan manners, an argument which derives support, also, from the manifest influence of Ben Jonson. It has been demonstrated that the characters in the original Italian version of *Every Man in his Humour* were studies of London types; and there seems to be little room for doubt that the characters in the Illyrian masquerade of Twelfth Night were drawn from originals in Shakespeare's London.

> Adoption strives with nature; and choice breeds
> A native slip to us from foreign seeds.

Thus says the Count, in All's Well That Ends Well (I. iii. 151-2), and the words aptly describe the Italianate mode in England under Elizabeth, as mirrored in the comedies and romantic dramas of Shakespeare. The delightful old courtier, Lafeu, there can be little doubt, had his original among the

courtiers of the English Queen; and the impostor Parolles bears a strong family resemblance to Bobadil, a type of adventurer studied by Ben Jonson in London. Leaving aside the many interesting indications of contemporary England in this play, we will quote the most important, referring as it does directly to London (IV. iii. 296-304):

First Soldier. What say you to his expertness in war?
Parolles. Faith, sir, has led the drum before the English tragedians; to belie him, I will not, and more of his soldiership I know not; except, in that country he had the honour to be the officer at a place there called Mile-end, to instruct for the doubling of files: I would do the man what honour I can, but of this I am not certain.

The city train-bands assembled for drill on Mile-end common, and reviews of the royal troops were also held there.

Two long scenes in The Winter's Tale, making about one-fourth of the play (IV. iii., iv.), take place at a farm homestead; the occasion is a sheep-shearing feast; the whole being a picture of rural England in Shakespeare's time. It has been shown earlier in this book that rural England lay immediately outside the city, and that life in Shakespeare's London was

not the urban life which our modern preconceptions are apt to lead us to imagine. The maps and views of the time show a wide belt of arable fields and meadows between the city and the wooded heights on the north; farmhouses were easily accessible, and London was closely linked with the agricultural scenes around it. It was in the neighbourhood of London, within an easy walk or ride, that Shakespeare in all probability witnessed the rural scenes which form an interlude in The Winter's Tale, and they were scenes which appealed to a London audience as near and familiar. No scenery was required to summon up the illusion of far-away fields and trees, nut-brown maids, and sun-burnt shepherds in smocks. The very theatres where the plays were performed, except in the winter months, were situated "in the fields," although only so short a distance from the city, as from Bishopsgate to Shoreditch: "into the fieldes playes to behold," as Davys has it in his *Epigramme*. The bleat of flocks and the ringing of sheep-bells could have been heard from the fields outside while the play was in progress in these open-air theatres. May-day dances, sheep-shearing feasts, harvest homes, the laden waggon, hunting and hawking, woodland sights and sounds — all

these things, remote to the modern Londoner, were part of the life of Shakespeare's London.

Now, to state the conclusions arrived at in this chapter. With necessary brevity we have traced the origin and development of the Masque in England; we have shown how the mental habit of masquerade and allegory was brought upon the stage in Shakespeare's time, and became wedded there with the Italianate mode of the cultured classes in Elizabethan society. In a literary sense, the Italianate mode goes back to a much earlier period, to the acclimatisation of the Petrarchan sonnet in England; but in Shakespeare's time the custom or fashion of foreign travel conjoined with the gallantry which distinguished the court of the virgin Queen to produce that fantastic mood and pseudo-Italian mode to which the foreign masquerade of Shakespeare's comedies correspond. The plays had not been so faithfully Elizabethan had they appeared in English guise. The illusion of distance heightened the romance and imparted zest to the satire; while the scenes were always realisable from contemporary life and manners in and around

London. Shakespeare wrought in this convention; he took it in a crude state and wrought it to its highest capacity of artistic result. Jonson's impatience with the convention may have come from a feeling that the utmost had been accomplished with it: in discarding it he showed himself less the contemporary than the successor of Shakespeare. He wrote for the court and times of the pedant-king, on ancient classical models, and his plays are pictures of the times he lived in; but after reading his fierce though vigorous satires, it is a relief to turn back to Shakespeare, and to share with the Elizabethans the illusions of poetry and romance which he brought into stageland under a masquerade of the remote.

CHAPTER V

SHAKESPEARE'S LONDON HAUNTS

THERE are seven years in the life of Skakespeare for which we have to depend on tradition—the first seven years he spent in London, the crucial and critical period in which he found his vocation. The ultimate source of these traditions is William Davenant, the poet's godson, and Thomas Betterton, the great actor of the Restoration, the depositary of the traditions of the stage from the time of its suppression and the exile of the players. From the lips of these two men the traditions were communicated to Rowe, the first biographer of Shakespeare. In our own time they have been subjected to critical analysis by Mr Halliwell-Phillipps, the effect of which has been to establish their general authenticity.

There is one point of complete accord in all these traditions. They are unanimous in their testimony that during the first years of his life in London

Shakespeare subsisted "by very mean employments" —mean, that is to say, by contrast with the position afterwards achieved by the poet. James Burbage, the father of the famous actor, and the first builder of playhouses, kept horses at livery in Smithfield; and there was a connection between this fact and the custom of the Elizabethans of riding to the play on horseback. Tradition says that Shakespeare's business was to take charge of the horses while the gallants and ladies were in the playhouse; that he so flourished in this occupation as to hire assistants, who became known as "Shakespeare's boys."

The connection between the playhouse and a large livery stable suggests that the horses were let on hire for the conveyance of playgoers from various points in London. The players were not allowed to perform in the city, so they built a playhouse away in the fields of Shoreditch and provided the means of communication for those who would ride "into the fields, plays to behold." This state of things had been developing since 1576, when the first playhouse was opened, and when Shakespeare arrived about nine years later he found his first means of livelihood in this custom of riding to the play.

At this date the only playhouses in existence on

the Middlesex side of London were the Theatre and the Curtain at Holywell (the present Holywell Lane leads to the site from Shoreditch High Street), and both houses were in the hands of the Burbages. About two years previously the association of players of which they were the leaders had been re-organised, and now held licence as Her Majesty's servants. Wilson and Tarleton were the most famous members of the company: the achievements of Richard Burbage lay in the future. The registers of Shoreditch Parish Church shew that the players resided in the liberty of Holywell, or Halliwell. Richard Tarleton, the original of Yorick, the King's Jester, in Hamlet, lived in Halliwell Street, and he was buried at the old church on September 3rd, 1588, about three years after Shakespeare came to London. On the 2nd February 1596 the bell tolled for James Burbage, "the first builder of playhouses," as his surviving family claimed for him. He was brought from Halliwell, as the register shews. In the following year his son Cuthbert lost his boy, whom he had named James, and another mournful procession went from Holywell to the Parish Church. There is every degree of probability that Shakespeare was present at the Church on these occasions. The

Burbage family clung to the neighbourhood after their dramatic fortunes had led them to other parts of the town. On December 30th, 1602, Cuthbert's daughter, "Elizabeth Burbedge," was christened, and who shall say that Shakespeare did not stand sponsor on the occasion? About two years after the poet's own too early demise at Stratford-on-Avon, there was a funeral at the old church to which people flocked from all parts of London, in honour of the Roscius of his time, the first sovereign of the English stage. Richard Burbage, who had achieved his great fame by acting in Shakespeare's plays, who was intimately associated with the poet during all his working years in London, was laid to rest on March 16th, 1619. His death is recorded by Camden as an event of national interest, and here at the old Parish Church of Shoreditch his funeral took place. The entry on the register shews that he continued to live in the neighbourhood of the old theatres to the end of his life: "Richard Burbadge, player, was bur. 16 March, 1618-19, Halliwell Street."

This church, which had become ruinous, was taken down in 1736; the present church was erected on the site, and opened in 1740. A picture of the old building exists in Ellis's account of the parish, and has been here reproduced.

SHOREDITCH CHURCH

A church so closely associated with the poet and his friends is an important feature of Shakespeare's London. It is described by Ellis as "a neat old structure of Saxon origin," and it had four aisles, a rare feature in churches. In 1581—about four years before Shakespeare first saw it—"a gallery was built within the great door, and a brick wall on the west side of it." Some church papers, dated in 1589, reveal the fact that there were two tenements near the church, which "during memory" had been used as a school-house and for the meeting of vestries. The peal of bells appears to have been of peculiar excellence, since it is recorded, in Nichols's *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, that in one of Her Majesty's journeys to Enfield she was much pleased with the Shoreditch bells.

Orlando. If ever you have look'd on better days,
If ever been where bells have knoll'd to church,
. . . . . .
Let gentleness my strong enforcement be.
—*As You Like It*, II. vii.

Over the gate of the old churchyard was the music of the 100th Psalm, says Ellis, in a connection which suggests that it was probably there in Shakespeare's time.

The evidence of Henslowe's Diary shews that, after his early association with the Burbages, Shakespeare became connected with other companies—those of the Earl of Sussex, the Earl of Derby, and the Earl of Pembroke—by whom his first plays were produced. These companies performed in the theatres of which Henslowe was manager, the Newington theatre and the Rose, and at this period it is not unlikely that Shakespeare resided in the neighbourhood of one of these theatres, on the Surrey side, in the liberty of the Clink, on the Bankside, or at Newington Butts. It happened, however, in 1594, that the Burbage association—now known as the Chamberlain's men—went to perform at Newington, on some joint arrangement with Henslowe, with the result that Shakespeare became a member of the Chamberlain's company, and so remained throughout the rest of his dramatic career. Perhaps he came back and lived for a time among the players in Halliwell liberty. But a few years later he had moved to Bishopsgate, and resided in the parish of St Helen's, most probably within the precinct of the dissolved nunnery.

The evidence of this was given by John Timbs, in his *Curiosities of London*, but not quite correctly;

ST HELEN'S, BISHOPSGATE

it appears in Dr Cox's *History of the Parish of St Helen's*, in the form of a quotation from Timbs, as follows:—

"In an Assessment Roll for levying subsidies, dated Oct. 1, 40th Eliz., 1598, the name of William Shakespeare occurs in connection with that of Sir John Spencer and other inhabitants of the Parish of St Helens, with the sum of 5*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, the assessment against the poet's name; arising, it is said, from the Bull Inn."

The importance of consulting the original records at first hand is well illustrated here. The record is an assessment under a commission for a lay subsidy upon the inhabitants of London, this particular record being the assessment for Bishopsgate ward, and the subdivision with which we are concerned being the assessment upon the inhabitants of St Helen's parish, within that ward. There is not a word about the Bull Inn, and the assessment made upon Shakespeare was not £5, 13s. 4d., but 13s. 4d. in respect of property valued at £5. His name occurs nineteenth in the list of inhabitants, the first being that of "Sir John Spencer, Knight, a Commissioner," who is assessed at £40 on property valued at £300. Shakespeare's valuation is probably in respect of furniture and books; it is most likely that he rented and furnished a couple of chambers in one of the tenements within

the precinct of St Helen's. At this date he was famous as a poet, and his Romeo and Juliet, produced two years previously, was the most popular play ever produced in London till that time: he himself may have eclipsed that popularity afterwards, but it was not surpassed by any other dramatist. The ambiguous suggestion as to the Bull Inn is gratuitous and misplaced. The comparative smallness of the valuation is against any such supposition, while it is perfectly in accord with the actual circumstances. Shakespeare resided in London in pursuit of his vocation, while he supported his home and family in Stratford-on-Avon.

In his description of Bishopsgate Street, Stow tells us that next unto the common hall and almshouses of the parish clerks "is the small parish church of St Ethelburge Virgin, and from thence some small distance is a large court called Little St Helen's, because it pertained to the nunnery of St Helen's, and was their house: there are seven alms-rooms or houses for the poor belonging to the company of Leathersellers. Then, somewhat more west, is another court with a winding lane, which cometh out against the west end of St Andrew Undershaft Church. In this court standeth the Church of St

Helen." The church has been "restored" since Shakespeare's time, but the court exists, sole remnant of the precinct, overshadowed on one side by Crosby Hall, and the winding lane "which cometh out against the west end of St Andrew Undershaft Church" seems to have survived amid all the reconstruction in the immediate neighbourhood. The word "Undershaft" retains a memory of merry England, "shaft" being derived from the maypole which was kept in the church and set up on May-day in the immediate neighbourhood. Coming out of St Helen's precinct into the High Street, Shakespeare saw before him the great house of Sir Thomas Gresham, "the most spacious of all hereabout," says Stow, "built of brick and timber." Another prominent object was the new water conduit "hard by within the gate," and, between Gresham's house and the conduit, were "divers fair inns, large for receipt of travellers, and some houses for men of worship."

This year, 1598, was probably the busiest and most productive of Shakespeare's life. The Burbages were in difficulties with their ground landlord in respect of the lease of their playhouse, The Theatre, in Shoreditch, and they were meditating a desperate *coup*. They quietly secured a site in the Clink liberty on

the other side of the river, and made their preparations. The landlord esteemed himself to be in the comfortable position of a gainer by either event. They wanted a fresh lease; he demanded more rent. They refused to pay an enhanced rent; he looked upon their playhouse as his reversion. There is something comic in the *coup* by which the Burbages checkmated the grasping landlord; perhaps the poet who lived in St Helen's, about midway between Holywell and the Bankside, laid the plans. Having secured their new site, and properly rehearsed the business, the players and their friends made a sudden descent upon their playhouse: carts were ready, hands willing; the whole fabric was quickly taken down, and carted away across the bridge to the Bankside. There, on a spot now covered by Barclay's brewery, they reconstructed a new playhouse out of the materials of the old, and when it was finished they called it The Globe.

The removal was effected in the winter, and when spring came, and the Londoners began to look across the water in wistful anticipation of the sports and diversions of Paris Garden and the Bankside, lo! there was a new theatre between St Saviour's Church and the Bear Garden, its pole elevated in

invitation to the public, and the flag waving in the breeze to signify the coming performance. If the reader will turn to the prefaces of the Temple Shakespeare, and make a list of the plays produced in this year, 1599, he will see how enthusiastically Shakespeare supported his comrades in their new departure. It is probable some of these plays were written during 1597 and 1598, while business was slack at the Theatre, owing to the death of James Burbage, and the consequent dispute with the landlord. Now, in the new playhouse, novelty after novelty was brought out, and the Globe took its place as the leading playhouse of the period—"the Glory of the Bank."

The Burbages did not immediately relinquish their connection with Shoreditch. They continued to reside at Holywell, and occasionally produced plays at the Curtain. Residing at St Helen's, Shakespeare was located midway between the two theatres, and in the pursuit of his business as actor and playwright, he must have frequently walked to and fro between them and his home, along Bishopsgate Street, down Gracechurch Street (Grass Street, as it was called then), past Eastcheap, over the Bridge to the Clink. At this time, too, the Burbages had another theatre

at Blackfriars; and after attending a rehearsal at the Globe, Shakespeare would walk on past the pike-ponds to Paris Garden stairs, and take the ferry there for Blackfriars.

How long Shakespeare continued to reside at St Helen's we do not know; but Malone, who enjoyed a high reputation for reliability, asserted that he possessed evidence that the poet resided on the Bankside between 1596 and 1608. Shakespeare's younger brother, Edmund, undoubtedly lived there, and died there, and was buried at Saviour's Church, as shown by the register: it is possible, therefore, that Malone may have been misled by this, and the evidence (which was never produced) may have referred to Edmund. But whether he ever lived there or not, the Bankside was one of Shakespeare's London haunts.

The Globe Theatre, in which Shakespeare and the Burbages won so much renown, was burnt down in 1613. The house shown by Visscher was the play-house as rebuilt after that catastrophe. Shakespeare retired from the stage about the time of the fire, and appears to have had no personal concern with the later playhouse. This building, which was hexagonal in shape, is familiar in pictures and reproductions as

the Globe, the impression being that it was Shakespeare's theatre. But this is not the case. The original Globe, reconstructed from the materials of the Theatre—Shakespeare's Globe—was a round building, with a base of brick and masonry, a superstructure of timber, and with a thatched roof over the surrounding galleries and the rooms at the back of the stage. This playhouse was burnt down in 1613, during the performance of a play on the reign of Henry VIII., called *All is True;* and there is no evidence of Shakespeare's participation in the theatrical affairs between this date and his death in 1616.

Between the Globe and the Bear Garden was Henslowe's Rose theatre. This house did not long continue to compete with the Globe; Henslowe and Alleyn, the managers, concentrating their attention upon their new theatre, the Fortune, in Cripplegate, which proved to be a very profitable concern, and yielded much of the wealth with which Edward Alleyn endowed the College of God's Gift at Dulwich.

The sports of the Bear Garden belonged to the rougher element of Elizabethan life; here was to be seen the outcropping of imperfectly civilised Eng-

land, that side of the English character which had not yet been effectually toned by the new influences of which Shakespeare was the most potent and popular minister. Still, as the open consciousness of the poet did not exclude any aspect of human life, we find reminiscences of these sports in his plays. The most conspicuous instance is perhaps in The Merry Wives of Windsor I. i., where Slender mentions by name one of the most famous bears of the London Bear-Garden:

Slender. . . . Why do your dogs bark so? be there bears i' the town?

Anne. I think there are, sir; I heard them talked of.

Slender. I love the sport well; but I shall as soon quarrel at it as any man in England. You are afraid if you see the bear loose, are you not?

Anne. Ay, indeed, sir.

Slender. That's meat and drink to me, now. I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but, I warrant you, the women have so cried and shrieked at it, that it passed: but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em; they are very ill-favoured rough things.

William Camden, we learn incidentally in his *Britannia*, sought relaxation in the diversions of Bankside. He was of opinion that the derivation of the name of the notorious Stews was not from the

"Bordello" there, but from "those Ponds or Stewes, which are here to feed Pikes and Tenches fat, and to scowre them from the strong and muddy fennish taste. Heere have I seen Pikes panches opened with a knife to shew their fatnesse: and presently the wide gashes and wounds came together againe by the touch of Tenches, and with their glutinous slime perfectly healed up. Among these buildings there is a place in manner of a Theater for baiting of Beares and Buls with Dogges: and certaine kenels appointed severally for Band-Dogges or Mastives, which are of that strength, and so sure of bit, that three of them are able to take and hold downe a Beare, and foure a Lion."

Beyond the Bear Garden, which, like the Rose and the Globe, was in the liberty of the Clink, was the Swan Theatre in Paris Garden. This theatre was projected in 1594, and probably finished and opened for public entertainments in 1596. The proprietor was an officer of the City Corporation, and he carried out his project in the teeth of the opposition of the Lord Mayor and the City Council. An interior view of this playhouse is given in a previous chapter (p. 81).

On the river bank opposite the Swan Theatre was

the most frequented landing-stage on the Surrey side—Paris Garden Stairs. A busy ferry plied between these stairs and Blackfriars on the opposite bank: the present bridge is a few paces west of the line described by this ferry. Shakespeare and his comrades of the Chamberlain's company used this ferry as the usual means of communication between their two playhouses, the Globe and the theatre at Blackfriars. The site of the latter may be identified by the existing Playhouse Yard at the back of the *Times* newspaper office, near the Blackfriars railway station.

The connections between Shakespeare's plays and the neighbourhood of Blackfriars have already been described. Towards the close of his career, the poet purchased a house in the vicinity, which he probably designed to be his residence when he paid visits to London after that retirement from theatrical life which was so untimely cut short by his death. "This Blackfriar's estate," wrote Mr Halliwell-Phillipps,* "was the only London property that Shakespeare is known for certain to have ever owned. It consisted of a dwelling-house, the first storey of which was erected partially over

* *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, I. 221, 6th edit.

a gateway, and either at the side or back, included in the premises, was a diminutive enclosed plot of land. The house was situated on the west side of St Andrew's Hill, formerly otherwise termed Puddle Hill, or Puddle Dock Hill, and it was either partially on or very near the locality now, and for more than two centuries, known as Ireland Yard." Puddle Dock was between Blackfriars stairs, "a free landing-place," Stow calls it, and Paul's wharf, "also a free landing-place with stairs." There was a watergate at Puddle wharf, by which the dock was shut off from the river. The name was derived originally from one Puddle that kept the wharf, "and now of Puddle Water," says Stow, "by means of many horses that watered there." Shakespeare's house was completely destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666.

Blackfriars was an aristocratic quarter. Noblemen who—from motives of prudence, or because they were not ambitious to take a prominent position at court and in state affairs—did not build themselves mansions in the line of stately dwellings between the city and Westminster, were content to live "private" in Blackfriars. Shakespeare's house was near the theatre, and near the residence of his patron, the

Earl of Pembroke, Baynard's Castle. Between the Castle and Downgate eastward, Thames Street was far from being noisome or squalid. Huntingdon House, between Downgate and Paul's Wharf, was the town residence of the Earl of Huntingdon. Adjoining Paul's Wharf was Derby House, formerly the residence of the noble house of Stanley, in Shakespeare's time the College of Arms. Near this was "Barklie's Inn," formerly the residence of the lords of Berkeley. Slightly northward of Thames Street, and quite near Shakespeare's house, was the church of St Andrew in the Wardrobe, and almost adjoining the church was the sovereign's Great Wardrobe.

St Paul's Churchyard was surrounded by a series of posts, supporting continuous chains. The eastern entrances into the Churchyard, from Cheapside and from Candlewick Street, were protected by gates. From the latter (the south-eastern) gateway stretched the Old Exchange southward, and running between this thoroughfare and Blackfriars was Carter Lane, whence Richard Quyney addressed a letter: "To my loveinge good ffrend and countreymann Mr. William Shackespere deliver thees:" From the Bell in Carter Lane, the 25 October, 1598. Paul's

Wharf Hill ran athwart Knightrider's Street and Carter Lane; in Knightrider's Street was an inn called "The Boar's Head Tavern" (Stow's *Survey*). The College of Physicians, famous in connection with Shakespeare's great contemporary, William Harvey, was situated in this street—"wherein was founded, in the year 1582, a public lecture in Surgery, to be read twice every week," writes Stow. The lane by which Shakespeare descended from his house into Thames Street was called Castle Lane, from its passing along by the west boundary of Baynard's Castle.

In Shakespeare's London the various trades had distinct quarters or localities, from which many existing street-names are derived. St Paul's Churchyard and Paternoster Row was distinctively the literary quarter: here were the stationers, printers, and booksellers; here was undoubtedly one of the haunts of William Shakespeare. At the west end of the cathedral, looking towards Ludgate, there were "three stately gates or entries, curiously wrought of stone": a large gate in the middle, and smaller gates on either side. Whether these gateways admitted immediately into the cathedral is not clear from Stow's description, but they were probably gateways in the wall which

surrounded the Churchyard. "In the midst of the middle gate," he says, "is placed a massy pillar of brass, whereunto the leaves of the said gate are closed and fastened with locks, bolts, and bars of iron." At either corner of this west end was a strong tower of stone, made for bell towers; the one on the north side stood between the cathedral and the bishop's palace, and "is at present to the use of the same palace." The other was the Lollard's Tower, an ecclesiastical prison. The bishop's palace was somewhat shorn of its ancient splendour. Adjoining the palace was the dean's house, "and also divers large houses are on the same side builded, which yet remain," writes Stow, "and of old time were the lodgings of prebendaries and residentaries, which kept great households and liberal hospitality, but now either decayed, or otherwise converted." Beyond these ecclesiastical buildings was the Stationers' Hall, "lately built for them in place of Peter College." Here were kept the Registers wherein have been found the entries of poems and plays by Shakespeare, published in the author's life-time (*see* Prefaces of the Temple Shakespeare, *passim*).

The bookseller's shop in our time has lost its studious air. It has become an emporium, a place

of commerce. But in the earlier years of the reign of Queen Victoria the bookseller's shop still continued to be what it had always been—the rendezvous of the scholar, the poet, the divine, the student. It was so in Shakespeare's London. We may assume that the poet visited some, if not all, the shops of the booksellers who issued his separate works while he was yet living in London. It is probable that these shops were, to a great extent, Shakespeare's library and reading-rooms.

" . . . he will sit you a whole afternoon sometimes in a bookseller's shop, reading the Greek, Italian, and Spanish. . . ."—Ben Jonson: *Every Man out of his Humour* (1599), III. i.

The following list of booksellers is compiled from the title-pages of the Shakespeare quartos, and arranged with a view to economy of space. It includes the unauthorised as well as the authorised editions. First, the shops in St Paul's Churchyard:—

Lucrece, 1594, at the sign of the White Greyhound.

Venus and Adonis, 1599, at the sign of the Greyhound (probably the same).

Ditto, 1602, at the sign of the Holy Ghost.

Henry IV., 1598, at the sign of the Angel.

Ditto, 1604, at the sign of the Fox.

Richard II., 1597 and 1598, both at the sign of the Angel.

Ditto, 1608, at the sign of the Fox.

Richard III., 1598 and 1602, both at the sign of the Angel.

Ditto, 1605, at the sign of the Fox, near St Austin's Gate.

Merchant of Venice, 1600, at the sign of the Green Dragon.

Merry Wives of Windsor, 1602, at the sign of the Flower de Luce and the Crown.

Henry IV., 1599, at the sign of the Angel.

Ditto, 1608 and 1613, both at the sign of the Fox, near unto St Augustine's Gate.

Titus Andronicus, 1600, Edward White's shop at the little north door of Paul's, at the sign of the Gun.

King Lear, 1608, at the sign of the Pide [Pied] Bull, near St Austin's Gate.

Troylus and Cresseid, 1609, at the Spread Eagle, in Paul's Churchyard, over against the north door.

The gate of St Augustine was one of the gateways on the eastern side of the churchyard, so named

probably from the neighbouring church of Saint Augustine.

There was an outlying contingent of booksellers in Fleet Street, by St Dunstan's Church, and here some of the Shakespeare quartos were issued :—

Midsummer Night's Dream, 1600, at the sign of the White Hart, Fleet Street.

Hamlet, 1604, shop under St Dunstan's Church.

Ditto, 1611, Romeo and Juliet, 1609, at the Shop in Saint Dunstan's Churchyard in Fleet Street under the Dyall.

Other publishers gave their addresses thus:— Pericles, 1609, at the sign of the Sun in Paternoster Row; Shakespeare's Sonnets, 1609, sold by John Wright, dwelling at Christ Church Gate; Henry V., 1602, shop in Cornhill, at the sign of the Cat and Parrots; Romeo and Juliet, 1599, shop near the Exchange (probably same as the preceding); and Henry V., 1600, was issued from a "house in Carter Lane, next the Powle Head." Stow mentions the Paul Head, and describes it as an inn, at the corner of Sermon Lane.

The middle aisle of St Paul's was a general rendezvous, and here Shakespeare had excellent opportunities for the observation and study of character.

"In like manner it is agreed upon that what day soever St Paul's Church hath in the middle isle of it neither a broker, masterless man, or a pennyless companion, the usurers of London shall be sworn by oath to bestow a steeple upon it." *—*Pennyless Parliament of Threadbare Poets*, 1608.

The following passage from Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, 1599, is an excellent illustration of the humours of this promenade in Shakespeare's London :—

Deliro. Troth, sir, I have promis'd to meet a gentleman this morning in Paul's.

. . . . . .

Fungoso. . . . Sister, if any body ask for mine uncle Sogliardo, they shall ha' him at the Herald's office yonder by Paul's.

Mitis. Stay, what new mute is this that walks so suspiciously?

Cordatus. O, marry this is one for whose better illustration we must desire you to pre-suppose the stage the middle isle in Paul's, and that the west end of it.

—Act II. Sc. vi.

. . . . . .

Shift. This is rare, I have set up my bills without discovery.

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* The steeple had not been replaced since it was destroyed by lightning in 1561.

Orange. What? Signior Whiff! what fortune has brought you into these parts?

Shift. Troth, signior, nothing but your rheum; I have been taking an ounce of tobacco hard by here with a gentleman, and I am come spit private in Paul's. Save you, sir.

. . . . . .

Puntarvolo. . . . When saw you Signior Sogliardo?

Carlo. I came from him but now, he is at the Herald's office yonder*; he requested me to go afore and take up a man or two for him in Paul's, against his cognisance was ready.

Punt. What, has he purchased arms, then?

Car. Ay, and rare ones too; of as many colours as e'er you saw any fool's coat in your life. I'll go look among yond' bills, an' I can fit him with legs to his arms.

—Act III. Sc. i.

After attending a rehearsal at the Blackfriars theatre in the morning, we can imagine Shakespeare walking up Creed Lane to the west end of Paul's Churchyard, and either calling at one of the booksellers' shops, or entering the cathedral for a promenade in the middle aisle. At the approach of the dinner-hour, we may suppose that he would walk into Cheapside, and enter the Mermaid tavern. After dinner he may have walked many a time into

* Derby House in Thames Street, by the corner of Paul's Wharf Hill.

the city and mingled with the merchants in the Royal Exchange. From here, he may have walked on to Tower Street, to hear from Mr Secretary Walsingham, if her Majesty had signified her pleasure to witness the new play, in the preparation of which the company were busily engaged. In Seething Lane (then called Sidon or Sything Lane), near the Church of Allhallows, Barking, were divers fair and large houses, and "Sir Francis Walsingham, Knight, principal secretary to the queen's majesty that now is, was lodged there, and so was the Earl of Essex," writes John Stow. At another time, Sir Francis was residing in the Papey at Aldgate, "a proper house, wherein sometime was kept a fraternity or brotherhood of St Charity and St John Evangelist." Sir Francis Walsingham repeatedly proved himself a friend and supporter of the players. When lodging at St Helen's, Shakespeare was but a short distance from the residence of the Queen's principal Secretary.*

It is probable that those traditions do not err

* Shakespeare may have lived at St Helen's some time after 1598, and Malone's evidence as to his living near the Bear garden on Bankside may have referred to Shakespeare's brother Edmund, who died there in 1607, and was buried in St Saviour's Church.

which place Shakespeare in more or less personal relationship with many of the leading men of his time. When persons of different social status were brought into association by culture in that age, there was nothing invidious in the relation of patron and protégé which resulted. It is those smaller and more subtle distinctions which belong to a more complex social system like our own that occasionally exercise the proud and scornful mind. In the time of Shakespeare, the classification of Society was so clearly defined that intercourse between persons of different status was possible without suspicion of arrogance on either side. The relationship between Edmund Spenser and the Earl of Leicester, for instance, was equally honourable to both, and while in London, the poet could make his home at Leicester (afterwards Essex) House without incurring the slightest feeling of obligation that it was not a pleasure to recall. Similarly with Shakespeare and his patrons and friends, the Lords of Southampton and Pembroke: he may have sojourned sometimes either at Southampton House or Baynard's Castle.

One of the earliest public events after Shakespeare's arrival in London was the funeral of the

noble Sidney. He was wounded at the battle of Zutphen on 22nd September 1586, and carried to Arnheim, where he died on the following 16th October. "Soon after his death," writes Anthony à Wood in his *Athenæ*, "his body was brought to Flushing, and being embarqued with great solemnity on 1st November, landed at Tower Wharf on the 6th of the said month. Thence 'twas convey'd to the Minories without Aldgate, where it lay in state for some time, till his magnificent funeral in St Paul's Cathedral, 16th of February following; which, as many princes have not exceeded in the solemnity, so few have equalled in the sorrow for his loss."

In estimating the impressions received by Shakespeare in London, it is certain that the news from the fields of war, in the Low Countries, and in Ireland, and the stories of the battlefield told by returned soldiers, should occupy an important place. The personality and the career of a man like Walter Raleigh, that splendid adventurer—at once a dreamer and a man of action—must surely have interested and attracted Shakespeare. There is a tradition that Raleigh was the founder of those meetings of the wits at the Mermaid, of which we hear so much

and know so little. Here Shakespeare, as he listened to the outpourings of that gallant and restless spirit, may have heard stories of the wars in Flanders and in Ireland—"the military academies of the time," as à Wood remarks, in both of which Raleigh had served —which afterwards found an echo in his play of Othello, the Moor of Venice; the character of Iago may have been suggested by some story of the English garrison in Ireland.*

Another man with whom Shakespeare may have forgathered at the Mermaid was Richard Hakluyt. From him he may have heard stories of the sea which he had not before heard directly from the sailors themselves. The source of Hakluyt's collection is described as follows in Ant. à Wood's account of that worthy:—

"But that which is chiefly to be noted of him is this, that his geny urging him to the study of history,

* In the *Pacata Hibernia, or History of the Wars in Ireland during the reign of Queen Elizabeth*, edited by Standish O'Grady and recently published, the editor writes: "We shall find Carew in the following pages writing decoy letters, crammed with such words as 'God' and 'Christ' and 'holy keeping,' hiring a man to assassinate the brave Sir John of Desmond, and generally holding a market for assassins." The atrocities of Richard III. and the treachery of Iago belong to such an age.

especially to the marine part thereof (which was encouraged and furthered by Sir Francis Walsingham), made him keep constant intelligence with the most noted seamen at Wapping near London. From whom, and many small pamphlets and letters, that were published and went from hand to hand in his time, concerning the voyages and travels of several persons, he compiled a book entit. 'English Vogages,' &c., Lond. 1598."

The Mermaid Tavern was in Bread Street, Cheapside. "The house lay back from Bread Street, and had passage entrances from Cheapside and Friday Street."* Hence, Aubrey says it stood in Friday Street; Ben Jonson speaks of "Bread Street's Mermaid"; and on the tokens it is described as "Ye Mermaid Tavern, Cheapside." It is a remarkable fact that John Stow does not mention this house in his *Survey*. He describes the adjoining houses in Cheapside called "Goldsmith's Row," and he describes Friday Street and Bread Street; but he tells nothing about the famous resort of poets, wits and players, nothing about the Blackfriar's theatre, nothing about the Globe.

This part of the city must have been really beauti-

* Cunningham and Wheatley's *London, Past and Present.*

ful. It is thus described by Paul Hentzner, who visited London in Shakespeare's time:—

"The streets in this city are very handsome and clean; but that which is named from the goldsmiths who inhabit it, surpasses all the rest: there is in it a gilt tower, with a fountain that plays. Near it on the farther side is a handsome house, built by a goldsmith, and presented by him to the city. There are besides to be seen in this street, as in all others where there are goldsmiths' shops, all sorts of gold and silver vessels exposed to sale, as well as ancient and modern medals, in such quantities as must surprise a man the first time he sees and considers them." *

"The best oysters are sold here in great quantities," observes Hentzner on the next page, and the thought occurs that he may have visited the Mermaid in Cheapside and partaken of some bivalves there with a cup of the famous Mermaid wine. It is odd to think that he may have passed Shakespeare on the threshold, or exchanged a passing courtesy with the poet, and we none the wiser—so much depends on the point of view.

* *Notes from Paul Hentzner's Travels in England during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth.* Trans. by Horace Walpole. London, 1797, p. 31.

If Sir Walter Raleigh was the first king of the wits at the Mermaid, there can be little doubt that his mantle fell upon Benjamin Jonson. His learning, his wit, his powers of satire, all conjoined to secure his ascendancy. As a tolerably early record of tradition, we may probably credit Fuller's description of the two famous poets, generally understood to refer to their meetings at the Mermaid :—

"Many were the wit-combates betwixt him and Ben Johnson, which two I behold like a Spanish great gallion, and an English man of War; Master Johnson (like the former) was built far higher in Learning; Solid, but Slow in his performances. Shake-spear, with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his Wit and Invention."*

The Lord Chamberlain's players became implicated in the ill-advised rebellion of the Earl of Essex, presumably Shakespeare among them. The story is revealed in the State papers, and may be readily gathered from the Calendars. On Saturday, 7th February 1601, several of the followers of Essex met

* Thomas Fuller, *Worthies of England*, fol., 1662 (*s.v.* Warwickshire, p. 126).

at the house of one Gunter, over against the Temple Gate, where they dined. They afterwards proceeded to the Globe theatre, where they were joined by another party of lords and gentlemen. By arrangement with the players the play of "King Henry the Fourth and the killing of Richard the Second" was performed. Having made their final appointments for the morrow, the conspirators then went to their homes.

On the next morning the Earl came forth from Essex House accompanied by the Earls of Southampton, Bedford, and Rutland, the Lords Sandys, Monteagle, and Chandos, and a party of 200 gentlemen armed only with their rapiers, and commenced that march into the city which had so unfortunate and futile a termination. Anticipated in all their movements by the Queen's ministers, it gradually dawned upon Essex that his cause was lost, and he gave the word for retreat to Essex House. On the way, however, they were intercepted by a strong company of armed men on Ludgate Hill, posted there by the Bishop of London. An affray ensued, and apparently many of the Earl's followers, realising the peril of their position, detached themselves from the party and fled. The rest retreated to Cheapside,

and turned down Friday Street. Here the Earl, feeling faint, called out for something to drink; and it is most likely that the cup of wine which was brought to him came from the Mermaid. In a few hours the Earl and his principal followers were prisoners; before the end of the month the Earl was beheaded; Lord Southampton remained a prisoner in the Tower till the death of Elizabeth.

However Shakespeare may have been attracted by the social side of the tavern life of the time, there is little to be found in his writings in praise of strong drink, while there are some notable passages, as for instance in Othello and in Hamlet, against it. It is singular, too, that although smoking became so fashionable a habit in his day, there is not a single allusion to it by Shakespeare. Ben Jonson satirised the habit freely, as, for instance, in *Every Man out of his Humour*, one of the characters wishes to teach another to smoke, and says: "I will undertake in one fortnight to bring you that you shall take it plausibly in any ordinary, theatre, or the Tilt-yard if need be, i' the most popular assembly that is."

The humours of the London tavern have their part in the plays of Ben Jonson, notably the scenes at the Mitre in *Every Man out of his Humour*. But the

writings of Jonson can only be considered as documents when great allowance is made for the satiric intent of the artist. He was the Hogarth of the stage, and an uncorrected impression derived from him would lead to the belief that human beings in his time were nothing but what is base or ridiculous. As pictures of London life, Jonson's writings are admirable for points of detail; but for the larger outline and for the spirit of the age, Shakespeare is a more reliable guide. His scenes at the Boar's Head are probably more truly Elizabethan than Jonson's scenes at the Mitre.

And Shakespeare was always a poet. His observations were derived from the same source as Jonson's; but he gathered them all up into his imagination, and fused them with creative force. Jonson deepened the colours of vice, and heightened the effects of folly, to produce a sense of shame. Shakespeare selected what was admirable, and glorified it for an example. His pictures of villainy are artistic, not gross; the villain is a lost angel, whose soul is saved by his earthly destruction. In the language of to-day, the one was a Realist and the other an Idealist; but in the deep and true sense the Idealist was the more real.

It is to be doubted if Ben Jonson partook of the life of Nature in and around London as Shakespeare did. From his books to the busy haunts of men, thence to the tavern,—that was Jonson's life; there is no aroma of "God's out-of-doors" in his pages. We can imagine Shakespeare leaving him at the Mermaid, when the pipes were lit and the cups had been frequently replenished, although the sun was still shining outside from the west. Leaving Ben in his glory at the head of the table, it was with a sense of relief, perhaps, that Shakespeare walked in the direction of the sun, westward, through Paul's Churchyard, out by Ludgate into Fleet Street to New Street, as Chancery Lane was then called. Here he would probably turn towards Southampton House, and, as he came along by the garden-wall of his friend's mansion, he would see growing thereon the "Whitlowe Grasse" or "English Naile woort," described by Gerard in his *Herball.* But at this time his friend was in the Tower, and the song of the nightingale from the gardens of Lincoln's Inn would only add a cruel comment on the thought of his imprisonment. "No hungry generations tread *thee* down," Shakespeare may have thought with a modern poet, and conscious of inability to aid his benefactor, he

may have taken out his "tables," and have written, in answer to the satiric note of the bird, that sonnet which has not ceased to vibrate with his unwonted appeal to the future :—

"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme ;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth ; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes."

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